A COLLECTION OF COMIC TALES.

TALE I.

BASHFUL BEN.

THE Story every Chriſtian knows,
How *Joſeph* did the Fleſh oppoſe:
How Beauty, Youth and Grandeur ſtrove,
In vain his righteous Soul to move.

This made the Name of *Joseph* ring,
When Virtue was a common Thing:
How much more strange, if I should tell
A modern Tale that sounds as well?

Caste, my Kinsman, and my Friend,
To Thee this Narrative I send;
To Thee, more chaste than *Scipio*; Thee
More chaste than Man was meant to be.
My Tales have all their moral Uses:
Remark what Moral this produces:
No more with *Celia* sleep a-Nights,
Merely to drive away the Sprights;
Nor for thy Chum *Susannah* chuse,
To talk of Nonsense and of News.
Such Treatment would a Vestal vex:
For 'twas the Sentence of the Sex,
When *Delia* told thee to thy Face,
"There was no Honour in the Case."

Near *Windsor* liv'd some ten Years since,
In rural Peace, one *Tony Prince*;
Of good Repute, and moderate Riches,
Got honestly by making Breeches;
At which his Equal scarce was found
In all the Country, ten Miles round.
His Work worn out, his Name forgot,
People may say, they knew him not:
But all the Country knew him then;
Him, and his Wife, and 'Prentice *Ben*.

His

His Wife and 'Prentice! what are they?
The Dame was juicy, fair, and gay:
Had six and thirty Winters seen;
Yet kept the Vigour of Sixteen.
The Boy was strait, genteel, and tall;
Had long black Hair, and curl'd withal:
But then a vastly virtuous Lad;
A better Servant no Man had.
This Wife, this Lad, a Spaniel Dog,
A Cow, some Poultry, and a Hog,
Were all the Family he kept:
Among which he as soundly slept,
As if two Porters at the Gate
Had watch'd with all the Pomp of State;
As if his House had been three Stories,
Large, splendid, strong, and all that more is.
The highest Honours he had borne,
That could his Quality adorn;
Serv'd Constable and Overseer;
And knew exactly either Year.
In ev'ry small litigious Matter
His Neighbours chose him Arbitrator;
And found him such a faithful Crony,
They call'd him always *Peaceful Tony*.
Sarah and he now twenty Years
(As by the Register appears)
In mutual Love had led their Lives,
The best of Husbands and of Wives:

Full twenty times, with annual Joy,
Renew'd their Vows, and bleſt the Boys
That ne'er thro' Life might be forgot
The Day that ty'd the ſacred Knot.
From ev'ry Circumſtance 'twas plain,
Each wore a voluntary Chain.
Love never choſe two ſmoother Darts;
Nor let them fly at kinder Hearts.

What could diſtreſs this happy Pair?
Av'rice, that deadly Source of Care.
Advanc'd in Age, impair'd in Health,
Tony's whole Thought was turn'd on Wealth.
He bought a Horſe, rode up and down,
And hawk'd his Goods from Town to Town.
Beſides that Gold engag'd his Mind,
He hop'd ſome Holidays to find:
For, tho' the Dame knew no Decay,
His uſual Debt he could not pay.

At all the Fairs and Markets round
Induſtrious *Tony* might be found.
Loons, who the Forelt us'd to range,
For Skins had Breeches in Exchange:
Each am'rous Swain of *Tony* bought;
Lac'd up the Thighs, and finely wrought.
Still while the Maſter ſold his Store,
Ben and his Miſtreſs made up more:
Ben and his Miſtreſs ſtaid at Home,
Where-ever *Tony* us'd to roam.

When Love once ſettles in the Head,
'Tis hard to bear the widow'd Bed.
Huſbands that leave too long their Wives,
Have Cauſe to mourn it all their Lives.
Our Dame, we ſaid, knew no Decay;
What could ſhe do,——from Day to Day?
As chaſte ſhe ſeem'd, as chaſte need be;
But two long Nights, and ſometimes three,
No Soul within but *Ben* and ſhe,
How could the Woman chuſe but think?
What Fleſh and Blood could ſleep a Wink?
In Juſtice to the Sex, our Song
Muſt ſay, ſhe bore the Trial long:
At laſt, the Tempter grew too ſtrong.
One Night, as by the Fire they ſate,
She thus began her amorous Prate;
Firſt having introduc'd her Tale
With giving *Ben* ſome Cake and Ale.
Wert thou not ſuch a ſimple Knave,
How kind a Miſtreſs might'ſt thou have!
Some Lads would long ere now have known
Which Side their Bread was butter'd on.
Some Lads! what would they not endeavour,
What would they grudge, to win my Favour?
But thou art the moſt ſheepiſh Fellow!
Always the ſame, ſober and mellow!
Yet, could one know the naked Truth,
Sly Rogue! thou art like other Youth.

Right good, I'll warrant, in a Corner!
Had I a Daughter, I should warn her.—
'Tis the still Sow drinks all the Draught.—
Ah *Ben!* thou hast a waggish Thought.
With that she clapp'd him on the Thigh;
And sigh'd, and glanc'd a leering Eye.
Ben drank his Ale, and eat his Cake;
Look'd at her; grinn'd; but did not speak.
'Tis only Caution, thought the Dame,
With some Remains of Virgin Shame.
He thinks; but dares not yet presume:
Suppose I take him to my Room,
And shew him there some wanton Freaks?
The Devil's in't if he mistakes!
All Flesh and Blood has the same Itch.
She thought; and thus renew'd her Speech:
I'll lie no longer in the House,
Unless we catch that curled Mouse.
I'd give a Crown to have him taken.
I've try'd with Cheese, and try'd with Bacon,
And spoke on't ev'ry Day this Week;
But 'tis in vain for me to speak!
You sleep yourself, so all goes right.—
Well! I insist upon't this Night.—
If you are good at baiting Traps,
We may have better Luck, perhaps.
To-morrow Morning we shall see.
Here! take it up, and come with me.

She led: *Ben* follow'd her; and did,
Nor more, nor leſs, than he was bid.
The wooden Trap was all he baited,
Whate'er his Miſtreſs had contrived.
She loos'd her Shoes; unlac'd her Stays;
Then — on her Elbow lull'd at Eaſe,
And talk'd of Sweethearts all the while,
Ben bluſh'd, and anſwer'd with a Smile.
How the Stupidity muſt teaze her!
The Bait! that was not put to pleaſe her!
She ſhew'd him how; and, by the Ways
Obliquely gave him Words to ſay.
But *Ben* took all Things in the Letter:
No Bait, he argu'd, could hang better.
The Boy was right in his Intent:
But little Thought what Bait ſhe meant.
Well! of the Mouſe-trap we deſpair:
Ben is not to be taken there:
He bids her civilly Good-night.
But now her Garters, they were tight:
She was almoſt aſham'd to aſk;
Yet — wiſh'd he'd undertake the Taſk:
His Fingers, poſſibly, might do;
And 'twas no Harm — betwixt them two.
Was ever more Confuſion ſeen,
Than in the Face of *Benjamin*?
Untie the Garters of his Dame?
His very Looks cry'd, Fie! for ſhame!

But, tho' he wish'd himself a Mile hence,
Her Pleasure aw'd him into Silence;
And Duty prompts him to obey:
So down he kneels — to make th' Essay;
Careful his Fingers did not rove,
Nor ev'n his Eyes, one Inch above.

In *Turkey*, when a Damsel's dress'd,
For Marriage, (doubtless in her Best,)
Her Maids, with num'rous Knots and Stitches,
Hamper the Knee-strings of her Breeches:
Nor must the Bridegroom board his Bride,
Before these Knee-strings are unty'd.
The frisky Jades try all they can,
To plague the vig'rous Musulman:
And giggle, while the Youth assails
Their Morning's Work, with Teeth and Nails:
Which conquer'd, out he puts the Light,
And craves their Absence for the Night:
They leave him, getting each a Kiss,
To take his whole Revenge on Miss.

Ben was as eager as a *Turk*,
And long'd as much to do his Work:
But then, 'twas with another View:
The Job completed, out he flew.
His Freedom was sufficient Gain:
He took the Labour for the Pains.

What Lengths will not a Woman run,
When once her Devil has begun?

At Midnight comes the Fit again:
She knocks for *Ben* with Might and Main.
'Twas — that a Candle might be brought;
For ſure ſhe was, the Mouſe was caught:
She wak'd with hearing ſomething ſtrike;
And 'twas the Trap, — or vaſtly like.
The Boy, (ſhe reaſon'd in her Mind,)
By this Time, doubtleſs, will be kind:
He muſt have weigh'd the whole Affair;
And comprehends it — to a Hair.
Ben roſe, obedient to the Call,
And ſtruck a Light; and that was all.
Here, Sirs, miſconſtrue not my Senſe;
I mean, 'twas all of Conſequence.
He view'd the Mouſe-Trap, if you pleaſe;
Saw Madam kill a Dozen Fleas;
Then with low Courteſy abſconded;
Nor did one civil Thing beyond it.
Oblig'd by Cuſtom ne'er to reſt,
Women are deſp'rate when they woo:
Their dear Repute ſo lies at Stake,
They dread the Confidents they make.
Borne thro' dull Forms by Paſſion's Guſt,
Ev'n he who ſerves them they diſtruſt:
But Vengeance, Rage, and mortal Spite,
Purſue the Wretch who baulks them quite.
What Solace could the Dame enjoy?
Slighted! and by her 'Prentice Boy!

Think

Think how her Bosom must be torn,
Betwixt Despair, Revenge, and Scorn!
Think how she groan'd away the Night,
And curs'd her Carnal Appetite!
She wish'd the very House would fall
On *Ben*, the Trap, herself, and all:
Then pray'd (so fervently before
Never did she the Gods implore)
That to Fourscore the Boy might live,
And long for what she long'd to give;
While all the Sex conspir'd with Fate,
And urg'd her unrelenting Hate.

When Morning came, 'twas odd to see
How Madam and her Man agree.
She storm'd and slouch'd all o'er the House:
But not one Word about the Mouse.
Ben wish'd in vain for Ale and Cake:
He wish'd, poor Lad! but durst not speak.
For Breakfast Cheese, and Cheese for Dinner!
What ails my Dame? The Devil's in her,
Thought he. At Night 'twas, Idle Puppy!
You want your Supper then! I'll sup ye!—
Dear Madam!—How! and dare you chatter?
What, you know nothing of the Matter!
Well, well, your Master comes To-morrow:
He shall inform you——to your Sorrow.

Ben guess'd, good Lad! and guess'd again,
What could these Looks and Speeches mean.

Never

Never was Youth in such a Fright:
He star'd all Day, and mus'd all Night.
Next Ev'ning home returns our Man:
When such a dreadful Tale began,
That *Tony* could not but attend,
And poor *Ben*'s Hair quite stood on end.
My Dear, that worthless Rogue of yours,
For God's Sake turn him out of Doors!
Leave him to work? a lazy Lubbard!
He works at nothing but the Cupboard.
He has not done one Thing I've ask'd:
Villain! how kindly was he task'd!
He might have done it, and been glad——
I cramm'd him—with the best I had.
Yet, all the Int'rest I could make,
The Dev'l a Stitch that Whelp would take.
Never was Dog so void of Grace:—
Yes! a fine Fellow in your Place!
Ben would have spoke, and *Tony* heard,
That so the Matter might be clear'd;
But on she ran: Make no Reply;
For either he turns out, or I:
So, *Tony*, take your Choice this Minute;
Your Wife or Boy: There's no more in it.
What could a Husband do, or say?
No Man would turn his Wife away;
No Man, whom Providence had blest
So many Years — with one so chaste.

The

The Boy was guilty on her Word:
What Evidence could she afford?
A stronger Proof no Law allows
From any Woman to her Spouse:
And Husbands live the easiest Lives,
Who on their Words believe their Wives.
Without more Question or Debate,
Thus their Affairs they reinstate.
To purchase Ease at all Adventures,
The Master gave up *Ben*'s Indentures.
Ben bundled up his Alls, and went;
With Peace and Ignorance content.
No more the Mistress play'd the Wag;
For *Tony* sold his dappled Nag;
And work'd, as usual, during Life;
And liv'd in Comfort with his Wife.
Now, to conclude this long Narration,
How shall we turn our Application?
The Case of *Ben* is clear and ample:—
Masters may quote their good Example;
And thence infer a young Man's Duty,
Respecting Madam, and her Beauty:
But noting well, from *Tony*'s Danger,
That the safe Head must be no Ranger.
Madam may take our Story next,
And raise new Doctrine from the Text;
May turn poor *Ben* to Ridicule;
And prove, even *Joseph* was a Fool.

In *London* all the Lads will wonder,
That every Booby ſhould ſo blunder:
For Lads, they ſay, among the Cits,
Are apt enough to mind their Hits.
From *Aldgate* on to *Covent-Garden*,
With Madam's Leave, they aſk no Pardon;
Nor think the Maſter wrong'd, who meets
With a clean Shop — and dirty Sheets.
Right Baſhful *Bets* are no-where many: —
The Country, now, hath few, if any.
You, my good Friend, to whom I ſend it,
Will take my Tale as I intend it:
A Caution, never to lie neuter
By *Sue*, or *Cælia*, for the future.

TALE II.

The LADY'S LOOKING-GLASS.

CELIA and I the other Day
Walk'd o'er the Sand-Hills to the Sea:
The ſetting Sun adorn'd the Coaſt,
His Beams intire, his Fierceneſs loſt:
And, on the Surface of the Deep,
The Winds lay only not aſleep:
The Nymph did like the Scene appear,
Serenely pleaſant, calmly fair:
Soft fell her Words, as flew the Air.

With ſecret Joy I heard her ſay,
That ſhe would never miſs one Day
A Walk ſo fine, a Sight ſo gay.
But, oh the Change! the Winds grow high;
Impending Tempeſts charge the Sky;
The Light'ning flies, the Thunder roars;
And big Waves laſh the frighten'd Shoars.
Struck with the Horror of the Sight,
She turns her Head, and wings her Flight;
And trembling vows, ſhe'll ne'er again
Approach the Shoar, or view the Main.
Once more at leaſt look back, ſaid I,
Thy ſelf in that large Glaſs deſcry:
When thou art in good Humour dreſt;
When gentle Reaſon rules thy Breaſt;
The Sun upon the calmeſt Sea
Appears not half ſo bright as Thee:
'Tis then that with Delight I rove
Upon the boundleſs Depth of Love:
I bleſs my Chain; I hand my Oar;
Nor think on all I left on Shoar.
But when vain Doubt, and groundleſs Fear
Do that dear fooliſh Boſom tear;
When the big Lip, and wat'ry Eye
Tell me, the riſing Storm is nigh:
'Tis then, thou art yon' angry Main,
Deform'd by Winds, and daſh'd by Rain;
And the poor Sailor, that muſt try
Its Fury, labours leſs than I.

Ship-

Shipwreck'd, in vain to Land I make;
While Love and Fate ſtill drive me back:
Forc'd to doat on thee thy own Way,
I chide thee firſt, and then obey.
Wretched when from thee, vex'd when nigh,
I with thee, or without thee, die.

TALE III.

The MERCHANT'S TALE.

THERE liv'd in *Lombardy*, as Authors write,
In Days of old, a wiſe and worthy Knight;
Of gentle Manners, as of gen'rous Race,
Bleſs'd with much Senſe, more Riches, and ſome Grace.
Yet led aſtray by *Venus'* ſoft Delights,
He ſcarce could rule ſome idle Appetites:
For long ago, let Prieſts ſay what they cou'd,
Weak ſinful *Laymen* were but Fleſh and Blood.
But in due Time, when ſixty Years were o'er,
He vow'd to lead this vitious Life no more;
Whether pure Holineſs inſpir'd his Mind,
Or Dotage turn'd his Brain, is hard to find;
But his high Courage prick'd him forth to wed,
And try the Pleaſures of a lawful Bed.
This was his nightly Dream, his daily Care,
And to the heav'nly Pow'rs his conſtant Pray'r,

Once, e'er he dy'd, to taſte the bliſsful Life
Of a kind Huſband and a loving Wife.
  Theſe Thoughts he fortify'd with Reaſons ſtill,
(For none want Reaſons to confirm their Will)
Grave Authors ſay, and witty Poets ſing,
That honeſt Wedlock is a glorious Thing:
But Depth of Judgment moſt in him appears,
Who wiſely weds in his maturer Years.
Then let him chuſe a Damſel young and fair,
To bleſs his Age, and bring a worthy Heir;
To ſooth his Cares, and free from Noiſe and Striſe
Conduct him gently to the Verge of Life.
Let ſinful Batchelors their woes deplore,
Full well they Merit all they feel, and more:
Unaw'd by Precepts, human or divine,
Like Birds and Beaſts, promiſcuouſly they Join:
Nor know to make the preſent Bleſſing laſt,
To hope the future, or eſteem the paſt;
But vainly boaſt the Joys they never try'd,
And find divulg'd the Secrets they would hide.
The marry'd Man may bear his yoke with Eaſe,
Secure at once himſelf and Heav'n to pleaſe;
And paſs his inoffenſive Hours away,
In Bliſs all Night, and Innocence all Day:
Tho' Fortune change, his conſtant Spouſe remains,
Augments his Joys, or mitigates his Pains.
  But what ſo pure, which envious Tongues will
ſpare?
Some wicked wits have libell'd all the Fair. With

With matchleſs Impudence they ſtile a Wife
The dear-bought Curſe, and lawful Plague of Life;
A Boſom-Serpent, a domeſtic Evil,
A Night-Invaſion, and a mid-day-Devil.
Let not the Wiſe theſe ſland'rous Words regard,
But curſe the Bones of ev'ry lying Bard.
All other Goods by Fortune's Hand are giv'n,
A Wife is the peculiar Gift of Heav'n:
Vain Fortune's Favours, never at a Stay,
Like empty Shadows, paſs, and glide away;
One ſolid Comfort, our eternal Wife,
Abundantly Supplies us all our Life:
This Bleſſing laſts, (if thoſe who try, ſay true)
As long as Heart can wiſh——and longer too.
Our Grandſire *Adam*, e'er of *Eve* poſſeſs'd,
Alone, and e'en in Paradiſe unbleſs'd,
With mournful Looks the bliſsful Scenes ſurvey'd,
And wander'd in the ſolitary Shade:
The Maker ſaw, took Pity, and beſtow'd
Woman, the laſt, the beſt reſerv'd of God.
A Wife! ah gentle Deities, can he
That has a Wife, e'er feel Adverſity?
Would Men but follow what the Sex adviſe,
All Things would proſper, all the World grow wiſe.
'Twas by *Rebecca*'s aid that *Jacob* won
His Father's Bleſſing from an elder Son:

Abuſive *Nabal* ow'd his forfeit Life
To the wiſe Conduct of a prudent Wife:
Heroic *Judith*, as old *Hebrews* ſhow,
Preſerv'd the *Jews*, and ſlew th' *Aſſyrian* Foe;
At *Heſter*'s Suit, the Perſecuting Sword
Was ſheath'd, and *Iſrael* liv'd to bleſs the Lord.
These weighty Motives, *January* the Sage
Maturely ponder'd in his riper Age;
And charm'd with vertuous Joys, and ſober Life,
Would try that Chriſtian Comfort, call'd a Wife.
His Friends were ſummon'd on a Point ſo nice,
To paſs their Judgment, and to give Advice;
But fix'd before, and well reſolv'd was he;
As Men that aſk advice are wont to be.)
My Friends, he cry'd, (and caſt a mournful look
Around the Room, and ſigh'd before he ſpoke:)
Beneath the Weight of threeſcore Years I bend,
And worn with Cares, am haſt'ning to my End;
How I have liv'd, alas! you know too well,
In worldly Follies, which I bluſh to tell;
But gracious Heav'n has ope'd my Eyes at laſt,
With due Regret I view my Vices paſt,
And as the Precept of the Church Decrees,
Will take a Wife, and live in holy Eaſe.
But ſince by Counſel all Things ſhould be done,
And many Heads are wiſer ſtill than one;
Chuſe you for me, who beſt ſhall be content,
When my Deſire's approv'd by your Conſent.

One

One Caution yet is needful to be told,
To guide your Choice; this Wife must not be old:
There goes a Saying, and 'twas ſhrewdly ſaid,
Old fiſh at Table, but young fleſh in Bed.
My Soul abhors the taſtleſs, dry Embrace
Of a ſtale Virgin with a winter Face:
In that cold Seaſon Love but treats his Gueſt
With Bean-ſtraw, and tough Forage at the beſt.
No crafty Widows ſhall approach my Bed;
Thoſe are too wiſe for Batchelors to wed;
As ſubtle Clerks by many Schools are made,
Twice-marry'd Dames are Miſtreſſes o'th' Trade:
But young and tender Virgins, rul'd with Eaſe,
We form, like Wax, and mold them as we pleaſe.
Conceive me, Sirs, nor take my Senſe amiſs;
'Tis what concerns my Soul's eternal Bliſs;
Since if I found no Pleaſure in my Spouſe,
As Fleſh is frail, and who (God help me) knows?
Then ſhould I live in leud Adultery,
And ſink downright to *Satan* when I die.
Or were I curs'd with an unfruitful Bed,
The righteous End were loſt, for which I wed;
To raiſe up Seed to bleſs the Pow'rs above,
And not for Pleaſure only, or for Love.
Think not I doat; 'tis Time to take a Wife,
When vig'rous Blood forbids a chaſter Life:

Thoſe

Thoſe that are bleſt with Store of Grace divine,
May live like Saints, by Heav'ns Conſent, and mine.
And ſince I ſpeak of Wedlock, let me ſay,
(As, thank my Stars, in modeſt Truth I may)
My Limbs are active, ſtill I'm ſound at Heart,
And a new Vigour ſprings in ev'ry Part.
Think not my Virtue loſt, tho' Time has ſhed
Theſe rev'rend Honours on my hoary Head;
Thus Trees are crown'd with Bloſſoms white as Snow,
The vital Sap then riſing from below:
Old as I am, my luſty Limbs appear
Like Winter-greens, that flouriſh all the Year.
Now, Sirs, you know to what I ſtand inclin'd,
Let ev'ry Friend with Freedom ſpeak his mind.
He ſaid; the reſt in diff'rent Parts divide,
The knotty Point was urg'd on either Side;
Marriage, the Theme on which they all declaim'd,
Some prais'd with Wit, and ſome with Reaſon blam'd.
Till, what with Proofs, Objections, and replies,
Each wondrous poſitive, and wondrous wiſe,
There fell between his Brothers a Debate,
Placebo this was call'd, and *Juſtin* that.
First to the Knight *Placebo* thus begun,
(Mild were his Looks, and pleaſing was his Tone);

Such

Such prudence, Sir, in all your Words appears,
As plainly proves, Experience dwells with Years!
Yet you pursue sage *Solomon*'s Advice,
To work by Counsel when Affairs are nice:
But, with the Wiseman's leave, I must protest,
So may my Soul arrive at Ease and Rest
As still I hold your own Advice the best.

Sir, I have liv'd a Courtier all my Days,
And study'd Men, their Manners, and their Ways;
And have observ'd this useful Maxim still,
To let my Betters always have their Will.
Nay, if my Lord affirm'd that black was white,
My Word was this, your Honour's in the Right.
Th'assuming Wit, who deems himself so wise
As his mistaken Patron to advise,
Let him not dare to vent his dang'rous Thought;
A noble Fool was never in a Fault.
This, Sir, affects not you, whose ev'ry Word
Is weigh'd with Judgment, and befits a Lord:
Your Will is mine; and is (I will maintain)
Pleasing to God, and should be so to Man;
At least, your Courage all the World must praise,
Who dare to wed in your declining Days.
Indulge the Vigour of your mounting Blood,
And let grey Fools be indolently good,
Who past all Pleasure, damn the Joys of Sense,
With rev'rend Dulness, and grave Impotence.

Justin.

Juſtin, who ſilent ſate, and heard the Man,
Thus, with a Philoſophic Frown, began.
A heathen Author, of the firſt Degree,
(Who, tho' not Faith, had Senſe as well as we)
Bids us be certain our Concerns to truſt
To thoſe of gen'rous Principles, and Juſt.
The Venture's greater, I'll preſume to ſay,
To give your Perſon, than your Goods away:
And therefore, Sir, as you regard your Reſt,
Firſt learn your Lady's Qualities at leaſt:
Whether ſhe's chaſte or rampant, proud or civil;
Meek as a Saint, or haughty as the Devil;
Whether an eaſy, fond, familiar, fool,
Or ſuch a Wit as no Man e'er can rule?
'Tis true, Perfection none muſt hope to find
In all this World, much leſs in Woman-kind;
But if her Virtues prove the larger Share,
Bleſs the kind Fates, and think your Fortune rare.
Ah, gent'e Sir, take Warning of a Friend,
Who knows too well the State you thus commend;
And Spight of all his Praiſes, muſt declare,
All he can find is Bondage, Coſt, and Care.
Heav'n knows, I ſhed full many a private Tear,
And ſigh in Silence, leſt the World ſhould hear:
While all my Friends applaud my bliſsful Life,
And ſwear no Mortal's happier in a Wife;

Demure

Demure and Chaſte as any veſtal Nun,
The meekeſt Creature that behold's the Sun!
But, by th' immortal Pow'rs, I feel the Pain,
And he that Smarts has Reaſon to complain.
Do what you liſt, for me; you muſt be ſage,
And cautious ſure; for Wiſdom is in Age:
But at theſe Years, to venture on the Fair!
By him, who made the Ocean, Earth, and Air,
To pleaſe a Wife, when her Occaſions call,
Would buſy the moſt vig'rous of us all.
And truſt me, Sir, the chaſteſt you can chuſe
Will aſk Obſervance, and exact her dues.
If what I ſpeak my noble Lord offend,
My tedious Sermon here is at an End.
'Tis well, 'tis wondrous well, the Knight replies,
Moſt worthy Kinſman, Faith you're mighty Wiſe!
We, Sirs, are Fools; and muſt reſign the Cauſe
To heath'niſh Authors, Proverbs, and old Saws.
He ſpoke with Scorn, and turn'd another Way;
What does my Friend, my dear *Placebo* ſay?
I ſay, quoth he, by Heav'n the Man's to blame,
To ſlander Wives, and Wedlock's holy Name.
At this the Council roſe, without delay;
Each, in his own Opinion, went his way;
With full Conſent, that all Diſputes appeas'd,
The Knight ſhould marry, when and where he pleas'd.

Who

Who now but *January* exults with Joy?
The Charms of Wedlock all his Soul employ:
Each Nymph by turns his wav'ring Mind poſſeſt,
And reign'd the ſhort-liv'd Tyrant of his Breaſt;
While Fancy pictur'd ev'ry lively Part,
And each bright Image wander'd o'er his Heart.
Thus, in ſome publick *Forum* fix'd on high,
A Mirrour ſhows the Figures moving by;
Still one by one, in ſwift Succeſſion, paſs
The gliding Shadows, o'er the poliſh'd Glaſs.
This Lady's Charms the niceſt cou'd not blame,
But vile Suſpicions had aſpers'd her Fame;
That was with Senſe, but not with Virtue, bleſt;
And one had Grace, that wanted all the reſt.
Thus doubting long what Nymph he ſhould obey,
He fix'd at laſt upon the youthful *May*,
Her Faults he knew not, Love is always blind,
But ev'ry Charm revolv'd within his Mind:
Her tender Age, her Form divinely fair,
Her eaſy Motion, her attractive Air,
Her ſweet Behaviour, her enchanting Face,
Her moving ſoftneſs, and majeſtic Grace.
Much in his Prudence did our Knight rejoice,
And thought no Mortal could diſpute this Choice:
Once more in haſte he ſummon'd ev'ry Friend,
And told them all, their Pains were at an End.
Heav'n, that (ſaid he) inſpir'd me firſt to wed,
Provides a Conſort worthy of my Bed;

Let

Let none oppoſe th' Election, ſince on this
Depends my Quiet, and my future Bliſs.
A Dame there is, the Darling of my Eyes,
Young, beauteous, artleſs, innocent and wiſe;
Chaſte, tho' not rich, and tho' not nobly born,
Of honeſt Parents, and may ſerve my Turn.
Her will I wed, if gracious Heav'n ſo pleaſe;
To paſs my Age in Sanctity and Eaſe:
And thank the Pow'rs, I may poſſeſs alone
The love'ly Prize, and ſhare my Bliſs with none!
If you, my Friends, this Virgin can procure,
My Joys are full, my Happineſs is ſure.
One only Doubt remains; full oft' I've heard,
By Caſuiſts grave, and deep Divines averr'd;
That 'tis too much for human Race to know
The Bliſs of Heav'n above, and Earth below.
Now ſhould the nuptial Pleaſures prove ſo great,
To match the Bleſſings of the future State,
Thoſe endleſs Joys were ill exchang'd, for theſe;
Then clear this Doubt, and ſet my Mind at Eaſe.
This *Juſtin* heard, nor could his Spleen controul,
Touch'd to the Quick, and tickled at the Soul.
Sir Knight, he cry'd, if this be all you dread,
Heav'n put it paſt your Doubt, whene'er you wed;
And to my fervent Pray'rs ſo far conſent,
That e'er the Rites are o'er, you may repent!
Good Heav'n no doubt the nuptial State approves,
Since it chaſtiſes ſtill what beſt it loves.

Then be not, Sir, abandon'd to Deſpair
Seek, and perhaps you'll find among the Fair,
One, that may do your Buſineſs to a Hair;
Not ev'n in Wiſh, your Happineſs delay,
But prove the Scourge to laſh you on your Way:
Then to the Skies your mounting Soul ſhall go,
Swift as an Arrow ſoaring from the Bow!
Provided ſtill, you moderate your Joy,
Nor in your Pleaſures all your Might employ,
Let Reaſon's Rule your ſtrong Deſires abate,
Nor pleaſe too laviſhly your gentle Mate.
Old Wives there are, of Judgment moſt acute,
Who ſolve theſe Queſtions beyond all Diſpute;
Conſult with thoſe, and be of better Chear;
Marry, do Penance, and diſmiſs your Fear.
So ſaid, they roſe, nor more the Work delay'd;
The Match was offer'd, the Propoſals made.
The Parents, you may think, would ſoon comply;
The Old have Int'reſt even in their Eye.
Nor was it hard to move the Lady's Mind,
When Fortune favours, ſtill the Fair are kind.
I paſs each previous Settlement and Deed,
Too long for me to write, or you to read;
Nor will with quaint Impertinence diſplay
The Pomp, the Pageantry, the proud Array.
The Time approach'd, to Church the Parties went,
At once with carnal and devout Intent:

Forth

Forth came the Prieſt, and bade th' obedient Wife
Like *Sarah* or *Rebecca* lead her Life:
Then pray'd the Pow'rs the fruitful Bed to bleſs,
And made all ſure enough with Holineſs.

And now the Palace-Gates are open'd wide,
The Gueſts appear in Order, ſide by ſide,
And plac'd in State, the Bridegroom and the Bride.
The breathing Flute's ſoft Notes are heard around,
And the ſhrill Trumpets mix their Silver Sound;
The vaulted Roofs with echoing Muſic ring,
Theſe touch the vocal Stops, and thoſe the trembling String.

Not thus *Amphion* tun'd the warbling Lyre,
Nor *Jubal* the ſounding Clarion could inſpire,
Nor fierce *Theodamus*, whoſe ſprightly Strain
Cou'd ſwell the Soul to rage, and fire the martial Train.

Bacchus himſelf, the nuptial Feaſt to grace,
(So Poets ſing) was preſent on the Place:
And lovely *Venus*, Goddeſs of Delight,
Shook high her flaming Torch in open Sight,
And danc'd around, and ſmil'd on ev'ry Knight:
Pleas'd her beſt Servant wou'd his Courage try,
No leſs in Wedlock, than in Liberty.
Full many an Age old *Hymen* had not ſpy'd
So kind a Bridegroom, or ſo bright a Bride.
Ye Bards; renown'd among the tuneful Throng:
For gentle Lays, and joyous nuptial Song;

Think not your ſofteſt Numbers can diſplay
The matchleſs Glories of this bliſsful Day:
The Joys are ſuch, as far tranſcend your Rage,
When tender Youth has wedded ſtooping Age.
The beauteous Dame ſate ſmiling at the Board,
And darted am'rous Glances at her Lord.
Not *Heſter's* ſelf, whoſe Charms the *Hebrews* ſing,
E'er look'd ſo lovely on her *Perſian* King:
Bright as the riſing Sun, in Summer's Day,
And freſh and blooming as the Month of *May!*
The joyful Knight ſurvey'd her by his Side,
Nor envy'd *Paris* with the *Spartan* Bride:
Still as his Mind revolv'd with vaſt Delight
Th' entrancing Raptures of th' approaching Night;
Reſtleſs he ſate invoking ev'ry Pow'r,
To ſpeed his Bliſs, and haſte the happy Hour.
Mean time the vigorous Dancers beat the Ground,
And Songs were ſung, and flowing Bowls went round,
With od'rous Spices they perfum'd the Place,
And Mirth and Pleaſure ſhone in ev'ry Face.
Damian alone, of all the menial Train,
Sad in the midſt of Triumphs, ſigh'd for Pain;
Damian alone, the Knight's obſequious Squire,
Conſum'd at Heart, and fed a ſecret Fire.
His lovely Miſtreſs all his Soul poſſeſs'd,
He look'd, he languiſh'd, and cou'd take no Reſt:

His

His Task perform'd, he sadly went his Way,
Fell on his Bed, and loath'd the Light of Day:
There let him lie; till his relenting Dame
Weep in her Turn, and waste in equal Flame.
The weary Sun, as learned Poets write,
Forsook th' Horizon, and roll'd down the Light;
While glitt'ring Stars his absent Beams supply,
And Night's dark Mantle overspread the Sky;
Then rose the Guests; and as the Time requir'd,
Each paid his Thanks, and decently retir'd.
The Foe once gone, our Knight prepar'd t' undress,
So keen he was, and eager to possess:
But first thought fit th' Assistance to receive,
Which grave Physicians scruple not to give;
Satyrion near, with hot *Eringo's* stood,
Cantharides, to fire the lazy Blood,
Whose Use old Bards describe in luscious Rhymes,
And Critics learn'd explain to modern Times.
By this the Sheets were spread, the Bride undress'd,
The Room was sprinkled, and the Bed was bless'd,
What next ensu'd beseems not me to say;
'Tis sung, he labour'd till the dawning Day,
Then briskly sprung from Bed, with Heart so light,
As all were Nothing he had done by Night;
And sipp'd his Cordial as he sate upright:

He kiss'd his balmy Spouse with wanton Play,
And feebly Sung a lusty Roundelay:
Then on the Couch his weary Limbs he cast;
For every Labour must have Rest at last.

But anxious Cares the pensive Squire oppress'd,
Sleep fled his Eyes, and Peace forsook his Breast;
The raging Flames that in his Bosom dwell,
He wanted Art to hide, and Means to tell.
Yet hoping Time th' Occasion might betray,
Compos'd a Sonnet to the lovely *May*;
Which writ and folded with the nicest Art,
He wrapp'd in Silk, and laid upon his Heart.

When now the fourth revolving Day was run,
('Twas *June*, and *Cancer* had receiv'd the Sun)
Forth from her Chamber came the beauteous Bride;
The good old Knight mov'd slowly by her Side.
High Mass was sung; they feasted in the Hall;
The Servants round stood ready at their Call.
The Squire alone was absent from the Board,
And much his Sickness griev'd his worthy Lord,
Who pray'd his Spouse attended with her Train,
To visit *Damian*, and divert his Pain.
Th' obliging Dames obey'd with one Consent;
They left the Hall, and to his Lodging went.
The female Tribe surround him as he lay,
And close beside him sate the gentle *May*:
Where, as she try'd his Pulse, he softly drew
A heaving Sigh, and cast a mournful View;

Then

Then gave his Bill, and brib'd the Pow'rs divine
With ſecret Vows, to favour his Deſign.
Who ſtudies now but diſcontented *May*?
On her ſoft Couch uneaſily ſhe lay:
The lumpiſh Huſband ſnoar'd away the Night,
Till Coughs awak'd him near the Morning Light.
What then he did, I'll not preſume to tell,
Nor if ſhe thought herſelf in Heav'n or Hell:
Honeſt and dull, in nuptial Bed they lay,
Till the Bell toll'd, and all aroſe to pray.
Were it by forceful Deſtiny decreed,
Or did from Chance, or Nature's Pow'r proceed;
Or that ſome Star, with Aſpect kind to love,
Shed its ſelecteſt Influence from above;
Whatever was the Cauſe, the tender Dame
Felt the firſt Motions of an infant Flame;
Receiv'd the Impreſſions of the love-ſick Squire,
And waſted in the ſoft infectious Fire.
Ye Fair, draw near, let *May*'s Example move
Your gentle Minds to pity thoſe who love!
Had ſome fierce Tyrant in her Stead been found,
The poor Adorer ſure had hang'd, or drown'd:
But ſhe, your Sex's Mirrour, free from Pride,
Was much too meek to prove a Homicide.
But to my Tale: Some Sages have deſign'd
Pleaſure the ſov'reign Bliſs of human Kind:
Our Knight (who ſtudy'd much, we may ſuppoſe)
Deriv'd his high Philoſophy from thoſe;

For,

For, like a Prince, he bore the vaſt Expence
Of laviſh Pomp and proud Magnificence:
His Houſe was ſtately, his Retinue gay,
Large was his Train, and gorgeous his Array.
His ſpacious Garden made to yield to none,
Was compaſs'd round with Walls of ſolid Stone;
Priapus could not Half deſcribe the Grace
(Tho' God of Gardens) of this charming Place:
A Place to tire the rambling Wits of *France*
In long Deſcriptions, and exceed Romance;
Enough to ſhame the gentleſt Bard that ſings
Of painted Meadows, and of purling Springs.

Full in the Centre of the flow'ry Ground,
A cryſtal Fountain ſpread its Streams around,
The fruitful Banks with verdant Laurels crown'd:
About this Spring (if antient Fame ſay true)
The dapper Elves their moon-light Sports purſue:
Their pigmy King, and little fairy Queen,
In circling Dances gambol'd on the Green,
While tuneful Sprites a merry Conſort made,
And airy Muſic warbled thro' the Shade.

Hither the noble Knight would oft repair,
(His Scene of Pleaſure, and peculiar Care)
For this he held it dear, and always bore
The ſilver Key that lock'd the Garden-door.
To this ſweet Place, in Summer's ſultry Heat,
He us'd from Noiſe and Buſineſs to retreat;

And

And here in Dalliance ſpend the live-long Day,
Solus cum ſola, with his ſprightly *May*.
For whate'er Work was undiſcharg'd a-bed,
The duteous Knight in this fair Garden ſped.
But ah! what Mortal lives of Bliſs ſecure,
How ſhort a Space our worldly Joys endure?
O Fortune, fair, like all thy treach'rous Kind,
But faithleſs ſtill, and wav'ring as the Wind!
O painted Monſter, form'd Mankind to cheat,
With pleaſing Poiſon, and with ſoft Deceit!
This rich, this am'rous, venerable Knight,
Amidſt his Eaſe, his Solace, and Delight,
Struck blind by thee, reſigns his Days to Grief,
And calls on Death, the Wretch's laſt Relief.
The Rage of Jealouſy then ſeiz'd his Mind,
For much he fear'd the Faith of Woman-kind.
His Wife not ſuffer'd from his Side to ſtray
Was Captive kept, he watch'd her Night & Day,
Abridg'd her Pleaſures, and confin'd her Sway.
Full oft in Tears did hapleſs *May* complain,
And ſigh'd full oft; but ſigh'd and wept in vain;
She look'd on *Damian* with a Lover's Eye,
For oh, 'twas fix'd; ſhe muſt Poſſeſs or die!
Nor leſs Impatience vex'd her am'rous Squire,
Wild with Delay, and burning with Deſire.
Watch'd as ſhe was, yet could he not refrain
By ſecret Writing to diſcloſe his Pain;

The Dame by Signs reveal'd her kind Intent,
Till both were conſcious what each other meant.
Ah, gentle Knight, what would thy Eyes avail,
Tho' they could ſee as far as Ship can ſail?
'Tis better ſure, when blind, deceiv'd to be,
Than be deluded when a Man can ſee!
Argus himſelf, ſo cautious and ſo wiſe,
Was over-watch'd, for all his hundred Eyes:
So many an honeſt Huſband may, 'tis known,
Who, wiſely, never thinks the Caſe his own.
The Dame at laſt, by Diligence and Care,
Procur'd the Key her Knight was wont to bear;
She took the Wards in Wax before the Fire,
And gave th' Impreſſion to the truſty Squire.
By Means of this, ſome Wonder ſhall appear,
Which in due Place and Seaſon, you may hear.
Well ſung ſweet *Ovid* in the Days of Yore,
What Slight is that, which Love will not explore?
And *Pyramus* and *Thiſbe* plainly ſhow
The Feats true Lovers, when they liſt, can do:
Tho' watch'd and captive, yet in Spite of all,
They found the Art of kiſſing thro' a Wall.
But now no longer from our Tale to ſtray;
It happ'd, that once upon a Summer's Day,
Our rev'rend Knight was urg'd to am'rous Play:
He rais'd his Spouſe, e'er Matin-bell was rung,
And thus his Morning Canticle he ſung.

Awake,

Awake, my Love, diſcloſe thy radiant Eyes;
Ariſe, my Wife, my beauteous Lady, riſe!
Hear how the Doves with penſive Notes complain,
And in ſoft Murmurs tell the Trees their Pain;
The Winter's paſt; the Clouds and Tempeſts fly;
The Sun adorns the Fields, and brightens all the Sky.
Fair without Spot, whoſe ev'ry charming Part
My Boſom wounds, and captivates my Heart;
Come, and in mutual Pleaſures let's engage,
Joy of my Life, and Comfort of my Age.

This heard, to *Damian* ſtrait a Sign ſhe made,
To haſte before; the gentle Squire obey'd:
Secret, and undeſcry'd, he took his Way,
And ambuſh'd cloſe behind an Arbour lay.
It was not long e'er *January* came,
And Hand in Hand with him his lovely Dame;
Blind as he was, not doubting all was ſure,
He turn'd the Key, and made the Gate ſecure.

Here let us walk, he ſaid, obſerv'd by none,
Conſcious of Pleaſures to the World unknown:
So may my Soul have Joy, as thou, my Wife,
Art for the deareſt Solace of my Life;
And rather wou'd I chuſe, by Heav'n above,
To die this Inſtant, than to loſe thy Love.
Reflect what Truth was in my Paſſion ſhown,
When un-endow'd, I took thee for my own,
And ſought no Treaſure but thy Heart alone.

Old

Old as I am, and now depriv'd of Sight,
While thou art faithful to thy own true Knight,
Nor Age, nor Blindneſs rob me of Delight.
Each other Loſs with Patience I can bear,
The Loſs of thee is what I only fear.
Conſider then, my Lady, and my Wife,
The ſolid Comforts of a virtuous Life:
As firſt, the Love of Chriſt himſelf you gain;
Next, your own Honour undefil'd maintain;
And laſtly, that which ſure your Mind muſt move,
My whole Eſtate ſhall gratify your Love:
Make your own Terms, and e'er to-morrow's Sun
Diſplays his Light, by Heav'n it ſhall be done.
I ſeal the Contract with a holy Kiſs,
And will perform, by this—my Dear, and this.—
Have Comfort, Spouſe, nor think thy Lord unkind;
'Tis Love, not Jealouſy that fires my Mind.
For when thy Charms my ſober Thoughts engage,
And join'd to them, my own unequal Age;
From thy dear Side I have no Pow'r to part,
Some ſecret Tranſports warm my melting Heart.
For who that once poſſeſs'd thoſe heav'nly Charms,
Cou'd live one Moment abſent from thy Arms?
He ceas'd, and *May* with modeſt Grace reply'd;
(Weak was her Voice, as while ſhe ſpoke, ſhe cry'd:)

Heav'n

Heav'n knows, (with that, a tender Sigh she drew)
I have a Soul to save as well as you;
And, what no less you to my Charge commend,
My dearest Honour, will to Death descend.
To you in holy Church I gave my Hand,
And join'd my Heart in Wedlock's sacred Band:
Yet after this, if you distrust my Care,
Then hear, my Lord, and witness what I swear:
First, may the yawning Earth her Bosom rend,
And let me hence to Hell alive descend;
Or die the Death I dread no less than Hell,
Sow'd in a Sack, and plung'd into a Well:
E'er I my Fame by one lewd Act disgrace,
Or once renounce the Honour of my Race.
For know, Sir Knight, of gentle Blood I came,
I loath a Whore, and startle at the Name.
But jealous Men on their own Crimes reflect,
And learn from thence their Ladies to suspect:
Else why these needless Cautions, Sir, to me?
These Doubts and Fears of Female Constancy?
This Chime still rings in every Lady's Ear,
The only Strain a Wife must hope to hear.
Thus while she spoke, a sidelong Glance she cast,
Where *Damian* kneeling, worshipp'd as she past.
She saw him watch the Motions of her Eye,
And singled out a Pear-tree planted nigh:

'Twas charg'd with Fruit that made a goodly Show,
And hung with dangling Pears on ev'ry Bough.
Thither th' obsequious Squire address'd his Pace,
And climbing, in the Summit took his Place;
The Knight and Lady walk'd beneath in view,
Where let us leave them, and our Tale pursue.

'Twas now the Season when the glorious Sun
His heav'nly Progress thro' the *Twins* had run;
And *Jove*, exalted, his mild Influence yields,
To glad the Glebe, and paint the flow'ry Fields.
Clear was the Day, and *Phœbus* rising bright,
Had streak'd the azure Firmament with Light:
He pierc'd the glitt'ring Clouds with golden Streams,
And warm'd the Womb of Earth with genial Beams.

It so befel, in that fair Morning-tide,
The Fairies sported on the Garden's Side,
And, in the midst, their Monarch and his Bride.
So featly tripp'd the light-foot Ladies round,
The Knights so nimbly o'er the greensword Bound,
That scarce they bent the Flow'rs or touch'd the Ground.

The Dances ended, all the fairy Train
For Pinks and Daisies search the flow'ry Plain;
While on a Bank reclin'd of rising Green,
Thus, with a Frown, the King bespoke his Queen:

'Tis

'Tis too apparent, argue what you can,
The Treachery you Women use to Man:
A thousand Authors have this Truth made out,
And sad Experience leaves no Room for Doubt.
Heav'n rest thy Spirit, noble *Solomon*,
A wiser Monarch never saw the Sun:
All Wealth, all Honours, the supreme Degree
Of earthly Bliss, was well bestow'd on thee!
For sagely hast thou said; of all Mankind,
One only just, and righteous, hope to find:
But should'st thou search the spacious World around
Yet one good Woman is not to be found.
Thus says the King who knew your Wicked-(ness;
The Son of *Sirach* testifies no less.
So may some Wildfire on your Bodies fall,
Or some devouring Plague consume you all;
As well you view the Leaches in the Tree,
And well this honourable Knight you see:
But since he's blind and old, (a helpless Case)
His Squire shall cuckold him before your Face.
Now by my own dread Majesty I swear,
And by this awful Sceptre which I bear,
No impious Wretch shall 'scape unpunish'd long,
That in my Presence offers such a Wrong.
I will this Instant undeceive the Knight,
And in the very Act restore his Sight:

And set the Strumpet here in open View,
A Warning to these Ladies, and to you,
And all the faithless Sex, for ever to be true.
And will you so, reply'd the Queen indeed?
Now, by my Mother's Soul, it is decreed,
She shall not want an Answer at her Need.
For her, and for her Daughters, I'll engage,
And all the Sex in each succeeding Age:
Art shall be theirs to varnish an Offence,
And fortify their Crimes with Confidence.
Nay, were they taken in a strict Embrace,
Seen with both Eyes, and pinion'd on the Place;
All they shall need is to protest and swear,
Breath a soft Sigh, and drop a tender Tear;
Till their wise Husbands, gull'd by Arts like these,
Grow gentle, tractable, and tame as Geese.
What tho' this stand'rous *Jew*, this *Solomon*,
Call'd Women Fools, and knew full many a one?
The wiser Wits of later Times declare,
How constant, chaste, and virtuous, Women are:
Witness the Martyrs, who resign'd their Breath,
Serene in Torments, unconcern'd in Death;
And witness next what *Roman* Authors tell,
How *Arria*, *Portia*, and *Lucretia* fell.
But since the sacred Leaves to all are free,
And Men interpret Texts, why shou'd not we?

By this no more was meant, than to have shown,
That sov'reign Goodness dwells in him alone
Who only Is, and is but only One.
But grant the worst; shall Women then be weigh'd
By ev'ry Word that *Solomon* has said?
What tho' this King (as ancient Story boasts)
Built a fair Temple to the Lord of Hosts;
He ceas'd at last his Maker to adore,
And did as much for Idol-gods, or more.
Beware what lavish Praises you confer
On a rank Leacher and Idolater;
Whose Reign indulgent God, says holy Writ,
Did but for *David*'s righteous Sake permit;
David, the Monarch after Heav'n's own Mind,
Who lov'd our Sex, and honour'd all our Kind.
Well, I'm a Woman, and as such must speak;
Silence would swell me, and my Heart would break.
Know then, I scorn your dull Authorities,
Your idle Wits, and all their learned Lyes.
By Heav'n, those Authors are our Sex's Foes,
Whom, in our Right, I must, and will oppose.
Nay, quoth the King, dear Madam, be not wroth:
I yield it up; but since I gave my Oath,
That this much injur'd Knight again shou'd see;
It must be done—I am a King, said he,
And one, whose Faith has ever sacred been.
And so has mine, (she said)—I am a Queen;

Her Answer she shall have, I undertake;
And thus an End of all Dispute I make:
Try when you List; and you shall find, my Lord,
It is not in our Sex to break our Word.

We leave them here in this heroic Strain,
And to the Knight our Story turns again;
Who in the Garden, with his lovely *May*,
Sung merrier than the Cuckow or the Jay:
This was his Song; "Oh kind and constant be,
"Constant and kind I'll ever prove to thee.

Thus singing as he went, at last he drew
By easy Steps to where the Pear-tree grew:
The longing Dame look'd up, and spy'd her Love
Full fairly pearch'd among the Boughs above.
She stopp'd, and sighing: O good Gods, she cry'd,
What Pangs, what sudden Shoots distend my Side?
O for the tempting Fruit, so fresh, so green!
Help, for the Love of Heav'ns immortal Queen!
Help, dearest Lord, and save at once the Life
Of thy poor Infant, and thy longing Wife!
Sore sigh'd the Knight to hear the Lady's Cry,
But cou'd not climb, and had no Servant nigh:
Old as he was, and void of Eye-sight too,
What cou'd, alas! the helpless Husband do?
And must I languish then, she said, and die,
Yet view the lovely Fruit before my Eye?
At least, kind Sir, for Charity's sweet Sake,
Vouchsafe the Trunk between your Arms to take:

Then from your Back I might aſcend the Tree;
Do you but ſtoop, and leave the reſt to me.
With all my Soul, he thus reply'd again,
I'd ſpend my deareſt Blood to eaſe thy Pain;
With that, his Back againſt the Trunk he bent,
She ſeiz'd a Twig, and up the Tree ſhe went.
Now prove your Patience, gentle Ladies all!
Nor let on me your heavy Anger fall:
'Tis Truth I tell, tho' not in Phraſe refin'd;
Tho' blunt my Tale, yet honeſt is my Mind.
What Feats the Lady in the Tree might do,
I paſs, as Gambols never known to you;
But ſure it was a merrier Fit, ſhe ſwore,
Than in her Life ſhe ever felt before.
In that nice Moment, lo! the wond'ring Knight
Look'd out, and ſtood reſtor'd to ſudden Sight.
Strait on the Tree his eager Eyes he bent,
As one whoſe Thoughts were on his Spouſe intent;
But when he ſaw his Boſom-Wife ſo dreſs'd,
His Rage was ſuch as cannot be expreſs'd:
Not frantic Mothers when their Infants die,
With louder Clamours rend the vaulted Sky:
He cry'd, he roar'd, he ſtorm'd, he tore his Hair;
Death! Hell! and Furies! what doſt thou do there?
What ails my Lord? the trembling Dame reply'd;
I thought your Patience had been better try'd:
Is this your Love, ungrateful and unkind,
This my Reward, for having cur'd the Blind?

Why

Why was I taught to make my Husband see,
By struggling with a Man upon a Tree?
Did I, for this, the Pow'r of Magic prove?
Unhappy Wife, whose Crime was too much Love!
If this be Struggling, by this holy Light,
'Tis struggling with a Vengeance, quoth the Knight,
So Heav'n preserve the Sight it has restor'd,
As with these Eyes I plainly saw thee whor'd;
Whor'd by my Slave—perfidious Wretch! I may
As surely seize thee, as I saw too well.—[Hell
Guard me, good Angels! cry'd the gentle *May*,
Pray Heav'n, this Magic work the proper Way!
Alas, my Love! 'tis certain, could you see,
You ne'er had us'd these killing Words to me:
So help me Fates, as 'tis no perfect Sight,
But some faint glimm'ring of a doubtful Light.
What I have said, (quoth he) I must maintain,
For by th' Immortal Pow'rs, it *seem'd* too plain—
By all those Pow'rs, some Frenzy seiz'd your
Mind,
(Reply'd the Dame) are these the Thanks I find?
Wretch that I am, that e'er I was so kind!
She said; a rising Sigh express'd her Woe,
The ready Tears apace began to flow,
And as they fell, she wip'd from either Eye
The Drops, (for Women, when they list, can cry.)
The Knight was touch'd, and in his Looks appear'd
Signs of Remorse, while thus his Spouse he chear'd.
Madam,

Madam, 'tis paſt, and my ſhort Anger o'er;
Come down, and vex your tender Heart no more:
Excuſe me, Dear, if aught amiſs was ſaid,
For, on my Soul, amends ſhall ſoon be made:
Let my Repentance your Forgiveneſs draw,
By Heav'n, I ſwore but what I *thought* I ſaw.
Ah my lov'd Lord! 'twas much unkind (ſhe
On bare Suſpicion thus to treat your Bride. (cry'd)
But till your Sight's eſtabliſh'd, for a while,
Imperfect Objects may your Senſe beguile.
Thus when from Sleep we firſt our Eyes diſplay,
The Balls are wounded with the piercing Ray,
And duſky Vapours riſe, and intercept the Day.
So juſt recov'ring from the Shades of Night,
Your ſwimming Eyes are drunk with ſudden Light,
Strange Phantoms dance around, and ſkim before your Sight.
Then, Sir, be cautious, nor too raſhly deem,
Heav'n knows how ſeldom Things are what they ſeem!
Conſult your Reaſon, and you ſoon ſhall find
'Twas you were jealous, not your Wife unkind:
Jove ne'er ſpoke Oracle more true than this,
None judge ſo wrong as thoſe who think amiſs.
With that, ſhe leap'd into her Lord's Embrace,
With well-diſſembled Virtue in her Face,
He hugg'd her cloſe, and kiſs'd her o'er and o'er,
Diſturb'd with Doubts and Jealouſies no more:

Both,

Both, pleas'd and bless'd, renew'd their mutual Vows,
A fruitful Wife, and a believing Spouse.

Thus ends our Tale, whose Moral next to make,
Let all wise Husbands hence Example take;
And pray, to crown the Pleasure of their Lives,
To be so well deluded by their Wives.

TALE IV.

DESIRE *and* POSSESSION.

'TIS strange, what diff'rent Thoughts inspire
In Man, *Possession* and *Desire*;
Think what they wish so great a Blessing,
So disappointed when possessing.

A Moralist profoundly sage,
I know not in what Book or Page,
Or, whether o'er a Pot of Ale,
Related thus the following Tale.

Possession and *Desire*, his Brother,
But, still at Variance with each other,
Were seen contending in a Race;
And, kept at first an equal Pace:
'Tis said, their Course continu'd long;
For, This was active, That was strong.
Till Envy, Slander, Sloth, and Doubt,
Misled them many a League about.
Seduc'd by some deceiving Light,
They take the wrong Way for the right.

Through

Through slipp'ry By-roads dark and deep,
They often climb, and oftner creep.
Desire, the swifter of the two,
Along the Plain like Lightning flew:
Till entring on a broad High-way,
Where *Power* and *Titles* scatter'd lay,
He strove to pick up all he found,
And by Excursions lost his Ground:
No sooner got, than with Disdain
He threw them on the Ground again;
And hasted forward to pursue
Fresh Objects fairer to his View;
In hope to spring some nobler Game:
But, all he took was just the same:
Too scornful now to stop his Pace,
He spurn'd them in his Rival's Face.
Possession kept the beaten Road;
And, gather'd all his Brother strow'd;
But overcharg'd, and out of Wind,
Though strong in Limbs, he lagg'd behind.

Desire had now the Goal in Sight;
It was a Tow'r of monstrous Height,
Where, on the Summit *Fame* did stand,
A Crown and Sceptre in her Hands,
Beneath, a Chasm as deep as Hell,
Where many a bold Adventr'er fell.
Desire, in Rapture gaz'd a while,
And saw the treach'rous Goddess smile;
But,

But, as he climb'd to grasp the Crown,
She knockt him with the Sceptre down.
He tumbl'd in the Gulph profound;
There doom'd to whirl an endless Round.

Possession's Load was grown so great,
He sunk beneath the cumb'rous Weight;
And, as he now expiring lay,
Flocks ev'ry omnious Bird of Prey;
The Raven, Vulture, Owl, and Kite,
At once upon his Carcase light;
And strip his Hyde, and pick his Bones,
Regardless of his dying Groans.

TALE V.

The ENCHANTMENT.

MIX, mix the Philters, quick—she flies, she flies,
Deaf to my Call, regardless of my Cries.
Are Vows so vain? Could Oaths so feeble prove?
Ah! with what Ease she breaks those Chains of Love!
Whom Love with all his Force had bound in vain,
Let Charms compel, and magick Rites regain.
Begin, begin, the magick Spels prepare,
Bring *Mira* back, my perjur'd Wanderer.
Queen of the Night, bright Empress of the Stars,
The Friend of Love, assist a Lover's Cares;

And

And thou, infernal *Hecate*, be nigh,
At whose Approach fierce Wolves affrighted fly;
Dark Tombs disclose their Dead, and hollow Cries
Echo from under ground—Arise, arise.
Begin, begin, the mystick Spells prepare,
Bring *Mira* back, my perjur'd Wanderer.
As crackling in the Fire this Laurel lies,
So, struggling in Love's Flame, her Lover dies;
It bursts, and in a Blaze of Light expires,
So may she burn, but with more lasting Fires.
Begin, begin, the mystick Spells prepare,
Bring *Mira* back, my perjur'd Wanderer.
As the Wax melts, which to the Flame I hold,
So may she melt, and never more grow cold.
Tough Iron will yield, and stubborn Marble run,
And hardest Hearts by Love are melted down.
Begin, begin, the mystick Spells prepare,
Bring *Mira* back, my perjur'd Wanderer.
As with impetuous Motion, whirling round,
This magick Wheel still moves, yet keeps its Ground,
Ever returning, so may she come back,
And never more th' appointed Round forsake.
Begin, being, the mystick Spels prepare,
Bring *Mira* back, my perjur'd Wanderer.
Diana, hail! all hail! most welcome Thou,
To whom th' infernal King and Judges bow;

O Thou, whoſe Art the Power of Hell diſarms,
Upon a faithleſs Woman try thy Charms.
Hark! the Dogs howl, ſhe comes, the Goddeſs comes,
Sound the loud Trump, and beat our brazen Drums.
Begin, begin, the myſtick Spells prepare,
Bring *Mira* back, my perjur'd Wanderer.
How calm's the Sky! how undiſturb'd the Deep?
Nature is huſht, the very Tempeſts ſleep;
The drowſy Winds breathe gently thro' the Trees,
And ſilent on the Beach, repoſe the Seas:
Love only wakes; the Storm that tears my Breaſt
For ever rages, and diſtracts my Reſt:
O Love! relentleſs Love! Tyrant accurſt,
In Deſarts bred, by cruel Tygers nurs'd!
Begin, begin, the myſtick Spells prepare,
Bring *Mira* back, my perjur'd Wanderer.
This Ribbon, that once bound her lovely Waiſt,
O that my Arms might gird her there as faſt!
Smiling ſhe gave it, and I priz'd it more
Than the rich Zone th' *Idalian* Goddeſs wore:
This Ribbon, this lov'd Relict of the Fair,
So kiſt, and ſo preſerv'd—thus—thus I tear.
O Love! why doſt thou thus delight to rend
My Soul with Pain? Ah! why torment thy Friend?
Begin, begin, the myſtick Spells prepare,
Bring *Mira* back, my perjur'd Wanderer.
Thrice have I ſacrific'd, and proſtrate thrice
Ador'd: Aſſiſt, ye Powers, the Sacrifice.

Whoe'er

Whoe'er he is whom now the Fair beguiles
With guilty Glances, and with perjur'd Smiles,
Malignant Vapours blaſt his impious Head,
Ye Lightnings ſcorch him, Thunder ſtrike him dead;
Horror of Conſcience all his Slumbers break,
Diſtract his Reſt, as Love keeps me awake;
If marry'd, may his Wife a *Helen* be,
And curs'd, and ſcorn'd, like *Menelaus*, He.
Begin, begin, the myſtick Spells prepare,
Bring *Mira* back, my perjur'd Wanderer.
Theſe pow'rful Drops, thrice on the Threſhold pour
And bathe with this enchanted Juice, her Door,
That Door where no Admittance now is found,
But where my Soul is ever hovering round.
Haſte, and obey; and binding be the Spell:
Here ends my Charm; O Love! ſucceed it well
By force of Magick, ſtop the flying Fair,
Bring *Mira* back, my perjur'd Wanderer.
Thou'rt now alone, and painful is Reſtraint,
Eaſe thy preſt Heart, and give thy Sorrows vent;
Whence ſprang, and how began theſe Griefs, declare
How much thy Love, how cruel thy Deſpair.
Ye Moon and Stars, by whoſe auſpicious Light
I haunt theſe Groves, and waſte the tedious Night!
Tell, for you know the Burthen of my Heart,
Its killing Anguiſh, and its ſecret Smart.
Too late for Hope, for my Repoſe too ſoon
I ſaw, and lov'd: Her Heart engag'd, was gone;

A happier Man poſſeſs'd whom I adore;
O! I ſhould ne'er have ſeen, or ſeen before.
Tell, for you know the Burthen of my Heart,
Its killing Anguiſh, and its ſecret Smart.
What ſhall I do? Shall I in Silence bear,
Deſtroy myſelf, or kill the Raviſher?
Die, wretched Lover, die; but O! beware,
Hurt not the Man who is belov'd by her;
Wait for a better Hour, and truſt thy Fate,
Thou ſeek'ſt her Love, beget not then her Hate.
Tell, for you know the Burthen of my Heart,
Its killing Anguiſh, and its ſecret Smart.
My Life conſuming with eternal Grief,
From Herbs, and Spells, I ſeek a vain Relief;
To every wiſe Magician I repair
In vain, for ſtill I love, and I deſpair.
Circe, *Medea*, and the *Sibyls'* Books,
Contain not half th' Enchantment of her Looks.
Tell, for you know the Burthen of my Heart,
Its killing Anguiſh, and its ſecret Smart.
As melted Gold preſerves its Weight the ſame,
So burnt my Love, and waſted in the Flame.
And now, unable to ſupport the Strife,
A glimmering Hope recalls departing Life:
My Rival dying, I no longer grieve,
Since I may aſk, and ſhe with Honour give.
Tell, for you know the Burthen of my Heart,
Its killing Anguiſh, and its ſecret Smart.

Witneſs

Witneſs, ye Hours, with what unwearied Care,
From Place to Place I ſtill purſu'd the Fair;
Nor was Occaſion to reveal my Flame,
Slow to my Succour, for it kindly came,
It came, it came, that Moment of Delight,
O Gods! and how I tremble at the Sight!
Tell, for you know the Burthen of my Heart,
Its killing Anguiſh, and its ſecret Smart.
Diſmay'd, and mentionleſs, confus'd, amaz'd,
Trembling I ſtood, and terrify'd I gaz'd;
My fault'ring Tongue in vain for Utterance try'd,
Faint was my Voice, my Thoughts abortive dy'd,
Or in weak Sounds, and broken Accents came,
Imperfect, as Diſcourſes in a Dream.
Tell, for you know the Burthen of my Heart,
Its killing Anguiſh, and its ſecret Smart.
Soon ſhe divin'd what this Confuſion meant,
And gueſt with Eaſe the Cauſe of my Complaint.
My Tongue emboldning as her Looks were mild,
At length I told my Griefs--and ſtill ſhe ſmil'd.
O Siren! Siren! fair Deluder, ſay,
Why would you tempt to truſt, and then betray?
So faithleſs now, why gave you Hopes before?
Alas! you ſhould have been leſs kind, or more.
Tell, for you know the Burthen of my Heart,
Its killing Anguiſh, and its ſecret Smart.
Secure of Innocence, I ſeek to know [grow,
From whence this Change, and my Misfortunes

Rumour is loud, and every Voice proclaims
Her violated Faith, and conſcious Flames:
Can this be true? Ah! flattering Miſchief ſpeak;
Could you make Vows, and in a Moment break?
And can the Space ſo very narrow be
Betwixt a Woman's Oath, and Perjury?
O Jealouſy! all other Ills at firſt
My Love eſſay'd, but thou art ſure the worſt.
Tell, for you know the Burthen of my Heart,
Its killing Anguiſh, and its ſecret Smart.
Ungrateful *Mira*! urge me thus no more,
Nor think me tame, that once ſo long I bore;
If Paſſion, dire Revenge, or black Deſpair,
Should once prevail beyond what Man can bear,
Who knows what I? Ah! feeble Rage, and vain!
With how ſecure a Brow ſhe mocks my Pain:
Thy Heart, fond Lover, does thy Threats belie,
Can'ſt thou hurt her, for whom thou yet would'ſt die?
Nor durſt ſhe thus thy juſt Reſentment brave,
But that ſhe knows how much thy Soul's her Slave.
But ſee! *Aurora* riſing with the Sun,
Diſſolves my Charm, and frees th' enchanted Moon;
My Spells no longer bind at Sight of Day,
And young *Endymion* calls his Love away:
Love's the Reward of all, on Earth, in Heaven,
And for a Plague to me alone was given:

But

But Ills not to be ſhunn'd, we muſt endure,
Death, and a broken Heart's a ready Cure.
Cynthia, farewell, go reſt thy wearied Light,
I muſt for ever wake---We'll meet again at Night.

TALE VI.

The VISION.

IN lonely Walks, diſtracted by Deſpair,
Shunning Mankind, and torn with killing Care,
My Eyes o'erflowing, and my frantic Mind
Rack'd with wild Thoughts, ſwelling with Sighs the Wind;
Thro' Paths untrodden, Day and Night I rove,
Mourning the Fate of my ſucceſsleſs Love.
Who moſt deſire to live, untimely fall,
But when we beg to die, Death flies our Call;
Adonis dies, and torn is the lov'd Breaſt
In midſt of Joy, where *Venus* wont to reſt;
That Fate, which cruel ſeem'd to him, would be
Pity, Relief, and Happineſs to me.
When will my Sorrows end? In vain, in vain
I call to Heaven, and tell the Gods my Pain;
The Gods averſe, like *Mira*, to my Pray'r,
Conſent to doom, whom ſhe denies to ſpare.

Why

Why do I ſeek for foreign Aids, when I
Bear ready by my Side the Pow'r to die?
Be keen, my Sword, and ſerve thy Maſter well,
Heal Wounds with Wounds, and Love with
Death repel.

Straight up I roſe, and to my aking Breaſt,
My Boſom bare, the ready Point I preſt,
When lo! aſtoniſh'd, an unuſual Light
Pierc'd the thick Shade, and all around grew bright;
My dazled Eyes a radiant Form behold,
Splendid with Light, like Beams of burning Gold;
Eternal Rays his ſhining Temples grace;
Eternal Youth fat blooming on his Face.
Trembling I liſten, proſtrate on the Ground,
His Breath perfumes the Grove, and Muſick's in
the Sound.

Ceaſe, Lover, ceaſe, thy tender Heart to vex,
In fruitleſs Plaints of an ungrateful Sex.
In Fate's eternal Volumes it is writ,
That Women ever ſhall be Foes to Wit.
With proper Arts their ſickly Minds command,
And pleaſe them with the things they underſtand;
With noiſy Fopperies their Hearts aſſail,
Renounce all Senſe; how ſhould thy Songs pre-
vail,
When I, the God of Wit, ſo oft could fail?
Remember me, and in my Story find
How vainly Merit pleads to Womankind:

I,

I, by whom all things ſhine, who tune the Spheres,
Create the Day, and gild the Night with Stars;
Whoſe Youth and Beauty, from all Ages paſt,
Sprang with the World, and with the World ſhall laſt.
How oft with fruitleſs Tears have I implor'd
Ungrateful Nymphs, and tho' a God, ador'd?
When could my Wit, my Beauty, or my Youth,
Move a hard Heart? or, mov'd, ſecure its Truth?
Here a proud Nymph, with painful Steps I chace,
The Winds out-flying in our nimble Race;
Stay, *Daphne*, ſtay---In vain, in vain, I try
To ſtop her Speed, redoubling at my Cry,
O'er craggy Rocks, and rugged Hills ſhe climbs,
And tears on pointed Flints her tender Limbs:
'Till caught at length, juſt as my Arms I fold,
Turn'd to a Tree ſhe yet eſcapes my Hold.
In my next Love, a diff'rent Fate I find,
Ah! which is worſe, the Falſe, or the Unkind?
Forgetting *Daphne*, I *Coronis* choſe,
A kinder Nymph---too kind for my Repoſe:
The Joys I give, but more provoke her Breaſt,
She keeps a private Drudge to quench the reſt;
How, and with whom, the very Birds proclaim
Her black Pollution, and reveal my Shame.
Hard Lot of Beauty! fatally beſtow'd,
Or given to the Falſe, or to the Proud;

By

By different ways they bring us equal Pain,
The False betray us, and the Proud disdain.
Scorn'd and abus'd, from mortal Loves I fly,
To seek more Truth in my own native Sky.
Venus, the fairest of immortal Loves,
Bright as my Beams, and gentle as her Doves,
With glowing Eyes, confessing warm Desires,
She summons Heaven and Earth to quench her Fires,
Me she excludes; and I in vain adore,
Who neither God nor Man refus'd before;
Vulcan, the very Monster of the Skies,
Vulcan she takes, the God of Wit denies.

Then cease to murmur at thy *Mira's* Pride,
Whimsy, not Reason, is the female Guide:
The Fate, of which their Master does complain,
Is of bad Omen to th' inspired Train. [mourns,
What Vows have fall'd? Hark how *Catullus*
How *Ovid* weeps, and slighted *Gallus* burns,
In melting Strains see gentle *Waller* bleed,
Unmov'd she hear'd; what none unmov'd can read.
And thou, who oft with such ambitious Choice,
Hast rais'd to *Mira* thy aspiring Voice,
What Profit thy neglected Zeal repays?
Ah what Return? Ungrateful to thy Praise!

Change, change thy Style, with mortal Rage
Unjust Disdain, and Pride oppose to Scorn; [return
Search all the Secrets of the Fair and Young,
And then proclaim, soon shall they bribe thy Tongue;

The

The sharp Detractor with Success assails,
Sure to be gentle to the Man that rails;
Women, like Cowards, tame to the Severe,
Are only fierce when they discover Fear.
Thus spake the God; and upwards mounts in Air,
In just Resentment of his past Despair.
Provok'd to Vengeance, to my Aid I call
The Furies round, and dip my Pen in Gall:
Not one shall 'scape of all the cozening Sex,
Vext shall they be, who so delight to vex.
In vain I try, in vain to Vengeance move
My gentle Muse, so us'd to tender Love;
Such Magic Rules my Heart, whate'er I write
Turns all to soft Complaint, and am'rous Flight.
Be gone, fond Thoughts, be gone, be bold, said I,
Satyr's thy Theme—In vain again I try,
So charming *Mira* to each Sense appears,
My Soul adores, my Rage dissolves in Tears.
So the gall'd Lion, smarting with his Wound,
Threatens his Foes, and makes the Forest sound,
With his strong Teeth he bites the bloody Dart,
And tares his Side with more provoking Smart,
Till having spent his Voice in fruitless Cries,
He lays him down, breaks his proud Heart, and dies.

TALE

TALE VII.

The WIFE of BATH.

BEhold the Woes of matrimonial Life, [Wife!
And hear with Rev'rence an experienc'd
To dear-bought Wiſdom give the Credit due,
And think, for once, a Woman tells you true.
In all theſe Trials I have born a Part,
I was myſelf the Scourge that caus'd the Smart;
For, ſince fifteen, in Triumph have I led
Five Captive Huſbands from the Church to Bed.

Chriſt ſaw a Wedding once, the Scripture ſays,
And ſaw but one, 'tis thought, in all his Days;
Whence ſome infer, whoſe Conſcience is too nice,
No pious Chriſtian ought to marry twice.

But let them read, and ſolve me, if they can,
The Words addreſs'd to the *Samaritan*:
Five Times in lawful Wedlock ſhe was join'd;
And ſure the certain Stint was ne'er defin'd.
Encreaſe and *Multiply* was Heav'n's Command,
And that's a Text I clearly underſtand.
This too, "Let them their Sires and Mothers
"And to their dearer Wives for ever cleave. [leave,
More Wives than one by *Solomon* were try'd,
Or elſe the wiſeſt of Mankind's bely'd.

I've

I've had myſelf full many a merry Fit;
And truſt in Heav'n I may have many yet.
For when my tranſitory Spouſe, unkind,
Shall die, and leave his woeful Wife behind,
I'll take the next good Chriſtian I can find.

Paul, knowing one could never ſerve our Turn,
Declar'd 'twas better far to wed, than burn.
There's Danger in aſſembling Fire and Tow;
I grant 'em that, and what it means you know.
The ſame Apoſtle too has elſewhere own'd,
No Precept for Virginity he found:
'Tis but a Counſel—and we Women ſtill
Take which we like, the Counſel, or our Will.

I envy not their Bliſs, if he or ſhe
Think fit to live in perfect Chaſtity;
Pure let them be, and free from Taint of Vice;
I, for a few ſlight Spots, am not ſo nice.
Heav'n calls us diff'rent Ways, on theſe beſtows
One proper Gift, another grants to thoſe:
Not ev'ry Man's oblig'd to ſell his Store
And give up all his Subſtance to the Poor;
Such as are perfect, may, I can't deny;
But, by your leave, Divines, ſo am not I.

Full many a Saint, ſince firſt the World began,
Liv'd an unſpotted Maid, in ſpite of Man:
Let ſuch (a God's-name) with fine Wheat be fed,
And let us honeſt Wives eat Barley Bread.

For me, I'll keep the Poſt aſſign'd by Heav'n,
And uſe the copious Talent it has giv'n:
Let my good Spouſe pay Tribute, do me right,
And keep an equal Reck'ning ev'ry Night:
His proper Body is not his, but mine;
For ſo ſaid *Paul*, and *Paul*'s a ſound Divine.
Know then, of thoſe five Huſbands I have had,
Three were juſt tolerable, two were bad.
The three were old, but rich and fond beſide,
And toil'd moſt piteouſly to pleaſe their Bride:
But ſince their Wealth (the beſt they had) was mine,
The reſt, without much Loſs, I could reſign.
Sure to be lov'd, I took no Pains to pleaſe,
Yet had more Pleaſures far than they had Eaſe.
Preſents flow'd in apace; with Show'rs of Gold,
They made their Court, like *Jupiter* of old.
If I but ſmil'd, a ſudden Youth they found,
And a new Palſy ſeiz'd them when I frown'd.
Ye ſov'reign Wives! give Ear, and underſtand;
Thus ſhall ye ſpeak, and exerciſe Command.
For never was it giv'n to mortal Man,
To lye ſo boldly as we Women can.
Forſwear the Fact, tho' ſeen with both his Eyes,
And call your Maids to witneſs how he lyes.
Hark, old Sir *Paul!* ('twas thus I us'd to ſay)
Whence is our Neighbour's Wife ſo rich and gay?
Treated, careſs'd, where'er ſhe's pleas'd to roam---
I ſit in Tatters, and immur'd at Home.

Why

Why to her Houſe doſt thou ſo oft repair?
Art thou ſo am'rous? and is ſhe ſo fair?
If I but ſee a Couſin, or a Friend,
Lord! how you ſwell, and rage like any Fiend!
But you reel Home, a drunken beaſtly Bear,
Then preach till Midnight in your eaſy Chair,
Cry, Wives are falſe, and ev'ry Woman evil,
And give up all that's female to the Devil.
If poor (you ſay) ſhe drains her Huſband'sPurſe;
If rich, ſhe keeps her Prieſt, or ſomething worſe:
If highly born, intolerably vain,
Vapours and Pride by Turns poſſeſs her Brain,
Now gayly mad, now ſourly ſplenetic,
Freakiſh when well, and fretful when ſhe's ſick.
If fair, then chaſte ſhe cannot long abide,
By preſſing Youth attack'd on ev'ry Side.
If foul, her Wealth the luſty Lover lures,
Or elſe her Wit ſome Fool-gallant procures,
Or elſe ſhe dances with becoming Grace,
Or Shape excuſes the Defects of Face.
There ſwims no Gooſe ſo grey, but ſoon or late,
She finds ſome honeſt Gander for her Mate.
Horſes (thou ſay'ſt) and Aſſes, Men may try,
And ring ſuſpected Veſſels e'er they buy:
But Wives, a random Choice, untry'd they take,
They dream in Courtſhip, but in Wedlock wake:
Then, nor till then, the Veil's remov'd away,
And all the Woman glares in open Day.

You tell me, to preſerve your Wife's good Grace,
Your Eyes muſt always languiſh on my Face,
Your Tongue with conſtant Flatt'ries feed my Ear,
And tag each Sentence with, my Life! my Dear!
If, by ſtrange Chance, a modeſt Bluſh be rais'd,
Be ſure my fine Complexion muſt be prais'd.
My Garments always muſt be new and gay,
And Feaſts ſtill kept upon my Wedding-Day.
Then muſt my Nurſe be pleas'd, and fav'rite Maid:
And endleſs Treats, and endleſs Viſits paid,
To a long Train of Kindred, Friends, Allies;
All this thou ſay'ſt, and all thou ſay'ſt are Lyes.

On *Jenkin* too you caſt a ſquinting Eye:
What? can your Prentice raiſe your Jealouſy?
Freſh are his ruddy Cheeks, his Forehead fair,
And like the burniſh'd Gold his curling Hair.
But clear thy wrinkled Brow, and quit thy Sorrow,
I'd ſcorn your Prentice, ſhould you die to Morrow.

Why are thy Cheſts all lock'd? on what Deſign?
Are not thy worldly Goods and Treaſure mine?
Sir, I'm no Fool: nor ſhall you, by St. *John*,
Have Goods and Body to your ſelf alone.
One you ſhall quit, in Spite of both your Eyes—
I heed not, I, the Bolts, the Locks, the Spies.
If you had Wit, you'd ſay, "Go where you will,
"Dear Spouſe, I credit not the Tales they tell:
"Take all the Freedoms of a married Life;
"I know thee for a virtuous, faithful Wife.

Lord!

Lord! when you have enough, what need you care
How merrily ſoever others fare?
Tho' all the Day I give and take Delight,
Doubt not, ſufficient will be left at Night.
'Tis but a juſt and rational Deſire,
To light a Taper at a Neighbour's Fire.
There's Danger too, you think, in rich Array,
And none can long be modeſt that are gay:
The Cat, if you but ſinge her tabby Skin,
The Chimney keeps, and ſits content within;
But once grown ſleek, will from her Corner run,
Sport with her Tail, and wanton in the Sun;
She licks her fair round Face, and friſks abroad,
To ſhow her Furr, and to be catterwaw'd.
Lo thus, my Friends, I wrought to my Deſires,
Theſe three right Ancient venerable Sires.
I told 'em, thus you ſay, and thus you do---
And told 'em falſe, but *Jenkin* ſwore 'twas true.
I, like a Dog, could bite as well as whine,
And firſt complain'd, whene'er the Guilt was mine.
I tax'd them oft' with Wenching and Amours,
When their weak Legs ſcarce dragg'd 'em out of Doors;
And ſwore the Rambles that I took by Night,
Were all to ſpy what Damſels they bedight.
That Colour brought me many Hours of Mirth;
For all this Wit is giv'n us from our Birth.

Heav'n gave to Woman the peculiar Grace
To ſpin, to weep, and cully human Race.
By this nice Conduct, and this prudent Courſe,
By Murm'ring, Wheedling, Stratagem, and Force,
I ſtill prevail'd, and would be in the Right,
Or Curtain-Lectures made a reſtleſs Night.
If once my Huſband's Arm was o'er my Side,
What! ſo familiar with your Spouſe? I cry'd:
I levied firſt a Tax upon his Need;
Then let him—'Twas a Nicety indeed!
Let all Mankind this certain Maxim hold,
Marry who will, our Sex is to be ſold.
With empty Hands no Taſſels you can lure,
But fulſom Love for Gain we can endure.
For Gold we love the impotent and old,
And heave, and pant, and kiſs, and cling, for Gold.
Yet with Embraces, Curſes oft' I mixt,
Then kiſs'd again, and chid and rail'd betwixt.
Well, I may make my Will in Peace, and die,
For not one Word in Man's Arrears am I.
To drop a dear Diſpute I was unable,
Ev'n tho' the Pope himſelf had ſet at Table.
But when my Point was gain'd, then thus I ſpoke,
" *Billy*, my Dear, how theepiſhly you look?
" Approach, my Spouſe, and let me kiſs thy Cheek;
" Thou ſhouldſt be always thus, reſign'd and meek!
" Of *Job*'s great Patience ſince ſo oft you preach,
" Well ſhould you practiſe, who ſo well can teach,
" 'Tis

" 'Tis difficult to do, I muſt allow,
" But I, my deareſt, will inſtruct you how.
" Great is the Bleſſing of a prudent Wife,
" Who puts a Period to Domeſtic Strife.
" One of us two muſt rule, and one obey;
" And ſince in Man right Reaſon bears the Sway,
" Let that frail Thing, weak Woman, have her Way.
" The Wives of all my Family have rul'd
" Their tender Huſbands, and their Paſſions cool'd.
" Fye, 'tis unmanly thus to ſigh and groan;
" What! would you have me to your ſelf alone?
" Why take me, Love! take all and ev'ry Part!
" Here's your Revenge! you love it at your Heart.
" Would I vouchſafe to ſell what Nature gave,
" You little think what Cuſtom I could have?
" But ſee! I'm all your own--nay hold--for ſhame!
" What means my dear--indeed--you are to blame.
Thus with my firſt three Lords I paſt my Life;
A very Woman, and a very Wife.
What Sums from theſe old Spouſes I could raiſe,
Procur'd young Huſbands in my riper Days.
Tho' paſt my Bloom, not yet decay'd was I,
Wanton and wild, and chatter'd like a Pye.
In Country Dances ſtill I bore the Bell,
And ſung as ſweet as Evening *Philomel*.
To clear my Quail-pipe and refreſh my Soul,
Full of't I drain'd the ſpicy nut-brown Bowl;

Rich

Rich luſcious Wines, that youthful Blood improve,
And warm the ſwelling Veins to Feats of Love:
For 'tis as ſure, as Cold ingenders Hail,
A liqu'riſh Mouth muſt have a lech'rous Tail;
Wine lets no Lover unrewarded go,
As all true Gameſters by Experience know.

But oh good Gods! whene'er a Thought I caſt
On all the Joys of Youth and Beauty paſt,
To find in Pleaſures I have had my Part,
Still warms me to the Bottom of my Heart.
This wicked World was once my dear Delight;
Now all my Conqueſts, all my Charms good Night!
The Flour conſum'd, the beſt that now I can,
Is e'en to make my Market of the Bran.

My fourth dear Spouſe was not exceeding true;
He kept, 'twas thought, a private Miſs or two:
But all that Score I paid—as how? you'll ſay,
Not with my Body, in a filthy way: [din'd;
But I ſo dreſs'd, and danc'd, and drank, and
And view'd a Friend, with Eyes ſo very kind,
As ſtung his Heart, and made his Marrow fry
With burning Rage, and frantick Jealouſy.
His Soul, I hope, enjoys eternal Glory,
For here on Earth I was his Purgatory.
Oft', when his Shoe the moſt ſeverely wrung,
He put on careleſs Airs, and ſat and ſung.
How ſore I gall'd him, only Heav'n could know,
And he that felt, and I that caus'd the Woe.

He

He dy'd, when last from Pilgrimage I came,
With other Gossips, from *Jerusalem*;
And now lies buried underneath a Rood,
Fair to be seen, and rear'd of honest Wood.
A Tomb, indeed, with fewer Sculptures grac'd,
Than that *Mausolus*' pious Widow plac'd;
Or where inshrin'd the great *Darius* lay;
But Cost on Graves is merely thrown away.
The Pit fill'd up, with Turf we cover'd o'er;
So bless the good Man's Soul, I say no more.
Now for my fifth lov'd Lord, the last and best;
(Kind Heav'n afford him everlasting Rest)
Full hearty was his Love, and I can shew
The Tokens on my Ribs in black and blue;
Yet, with a knack, my Heart he could have won,
While yet the Smart was shooting in the Bone.
How quaint an Appetite in Women reigns!
Free Gifts we scorn, and love what costs us Pains;
Let Men avoid us, and on them we leap;
A glutted Market makes Provision cheap.
In pure good Will I took this jovial Spark,
Of *Oxford* he, a most egregious Clerk.
He boarded with a Widow in the Town,
A trusty Gossip, one Dame *Alison*.
Full well the Secrets of my Soul she knew,
Better than e'er our Parish Priest could do.
To her I told whatever could befall;
Had but my Husband piss'd against a Wall,

Or

Or done a Thing that might have coſt his Liſe,
She—and my Niece—and one more worthy Wife,
Had known it all: what moſt he would conceal,
To theſe I made no Scruple to reveal.
Oft' has he bluſh'd from Ear to Ear for ſhame,
That e'er he told a Secret to his Dame.

It ſo befel, in holy Time of *Lent*,
That oft' a Day I to this Goſſip went;
My Huſband, thank my Stars, was out of Town)
From Houſe to Houſe we rambled up and down,
This Clerk, my ſelf, and my good Neighbour *Alce*,
To ſee, be ſeen, to tell, and gather Tales,
Viſits to ev'ry Church we daily paid,
And march'd in ev'ry holy Maſquerade,
The Stations duly, and the Vigils kept;
Not much we faſted, but ſcarce ever ſlept;
At Sermons too I ſhone in Scarlet gay;
The waſting Moth ne'er ſpoil'd my beſt Array,
The Cauſe was this; I wore it ev'ry Day.

'Twas when freſh *May* her early Bloſſoms yields,
This Clerk and I were walking in the Fields.
We grew ſo intimate, I can't tell how,
I pawn'd my Honour, and engag'd my Vow,
If e'er I laid my Huſband in his Urn,
That he, and only he, ſhould ſerve my Turn.
We ſtrait ſtruck Hands, the Bargain was agreed;
I ſtill have Shifts againſt a Time of Need:

The

The Mouſe that always truſts to one poor Hole,
Can never be a Mouſe of any Soul. [him,
I vow'd, I ſcarce could ſleep ſince firſt I knew
And durſt be ſworn he had bewitch'd me to him;
If e'er I ſlept, I dream'd of him alone,
And Dreams foretel, as learned Men have ſhown;
All this I ſaid; but Dreams, Sirs, I had none:
I follow'd but my crafty Crony's Lore,
Who bid me tell this Lye—and twenty more.
Thus Day by Day, and Month by Month we paſt,
It pleas'd the Lord to take my Spouſe at laſt.
I tore my Gown, I ſoil'd my Locks with Duſt,
And beat my Breaſts, as wretched Widows--muſt.
Before my Face my Handkerchief I ſpread,
To hide the Flood of Tears I did—not ſhed.
The good Man's Coffin to the Church was born;
Around, the Neighbours, and my Clerk to mourn.
But as he march'd, good Gods! he ſhow'd a Pair
Of Legs and Feet, ſo clean, ſo ſtrong, ſo fair!
Of twenty Winters Age he ſeem'd to be;
I (to ſay Truth) was twenty more than he;
But vig'rous ſtill, a lively buxom Dame;
And had a wond'rous Gift to quench a Flame.
A Conj'rer once, that deeply could divine,
Aſſur'd me, *Mars* in *Taurus* was my Sign.
As the Stars order'd, ſuch my Life has been:
Alas, alas, that ever Love was Sin!

Fair

Fair *Venus* gave me Fire, and sprightly Grace,
And *Mars* Assurance, and a dauntless Face:
By Virtue of his pow'rful Constellation,
I follow'd always my own Inclination.
But to my Tale: A Month scarce pass'd away,
With Dance and Song we kept the nuptial Day.
All I possess'd I gave to his Command,
My Goods and Chattels, Money, House, and Land;
But oft' repented, and repent it still;
He prov'd a Rebel to my sovereign Will:
Nay once by Heav'n he struck me on the Face;
Hear but the Fact, and judge your selves the Case.
Stubborn as any Lioness was I;
And knew full well to raise my Voice on high;
As true a Rambler as I was before,
And would be so, in spite of all he swore.
He, against this Right sagely would advise,
And old Examples set before my Eyes,
Tell how the *Roman* Matrons led their Life,
Of *Gracchus'* Mother, and *Duilius'* Wife;
And chose the Sermon, as beseem'd his Wit,
With some grave Sentence out of holy Writ.
Oft' would he say, who builds his House on Sands,
Pricks his blind Horse across the fallow Lands,
Or lets his Wife abroad with Pilgrims roam,
Deserves a Fool's-cap and long Ears at Home.
All this avail'd not; for whoe'er he be
That tells my Faults, I hate him mortally:

And ſo do Numbers more, I'll boldly ſay,
Men, Women, Clergy, Regular, and Lay.
My Spouſe (who was, you know, to Learning bred
A certain Treatiſe oft' at Evening read,
Where divers Authors (whom the Dev'l confound
For all their Lyes) were in one Volume bound.
Valerius, whole; and of St. *Jerome*, Part;
Chryſippus and *Tertullian*, *Ovid*'s Art,
Solomon's Proverbs, *Eloiſa*'s Loves;
And many more than ſure the Church approves.
More Legends were there here, of wicked Wives,
Than good, in all the Bible and Saints Lives.
Who drew the Lion vanquiſh'd? 'Twas a Man.
But cou'd we Women write as Scholars can,
Men ſhould ſtand mark'd with far more Wickedneſs,
Than all the Sons of *Adam* could redreſs.
Love ſeldom haunts the Breaſt where Learning lies,
And *Venus* ſets e'er *Mercury* can riſe.
Thoſe play the Scholars who can't play the Men,
And uſe that Weapon which they have, their Pen;
When old, and paſt the Reliſh of Delight,
Then down they ſit, and in their Dotage write,
That not one Woman keeps her Marriage Vow.
(This by the Way, but to my Purpoſe now.)
It chanc'd my Huſband, on a Winter's Night,
Read in this Book, aloud, with ſtrange Delight,
How the firſt Female (as the Scriptures ſhow)
Brought her own Spouſe and all his Race to Woe.

How *Sampſon* fell; and he whom *Dejanire*
Wrap'd in th' envenom'd Shirt, and ſet on Fire.
How curs'd *Eryphile* her Lord betray'd,
And the dire Ambuſh *Clytemneſtra* laid.
But what moſt pleas'd him was the *Cretan* Dame,
And Huſband-bull—oh monſtrous! fie for ſhame!
He had by Heart, the whole Detail of Woe
Xantippe made her good Man undergo;
How oft' ſhe ſcolded in a Day, he knew,
How many Piſs-pots on the Sage ſhe threw;
Who took it patiently, and wip'd his Head;
Rain follows Thunder, that was all he ſaid.
He read, how *Arius* to his Friend complain'd,
A fatal Tree was growing in his Land,
On which three Wives ſucceſſively had twin'd
A ſliding Nooſe, and waver'd in the Wind.
Where grows this Plant (reply'd the Friend) oh where?
For better Fruit did never Orchard bear.
Give me ſome Slip of this moſt bliſsful Tree,
And in my Garden planted ſhall it be.
Then how two Wives their Lord's Deſtruction prove,
Thro' Hatred one, and one thro' too much Love;
That for her Huſband mix'd a poiſonous Draught,
And this for Luſt an am'rous Philtre bought,
The nimble Juice ſoon ſeiz'd his giddy Head,
Frantic at Night, and in the Morning dead, ſlain,
How ſome with Swords their ſleeping Lords have
And ſome have hammer'd Nails into their Brain,

And

And ſome have drench'd them with a deadly Potion;
All this he read, and read with great Devotion.
Long time I heard, and ſwell'd, and bluſh'd, and frown'd;
But when no End of theſe vile Tales I found,
When ſtill he read, and laugh'd, and read again
And half the Night was thus conſum'd in vain;
Provok'd to Vengeance, three large Leaves I tore,
And with one Buffet fell'd him on the Floor.
With that, my Huſband in a Fury roſe,
And down he ſettled me with hearty Blows.
I groan'd, and lay extended on my Side;
Oh! thou haſt ſlain me for my Wealth (I cry'd)
Yet I forgive thee—take my laſt Embrace—
He wept, kind Soul! and ſtoop'd to kiſs my Face
I took him ſuch a Box as turn'd him blue,
Then ſigh'd and cry'd, adieu, my Dear, adieu!
But after many a hearty Struggle paſt,
I condeſcended to be pleas'd at laſt.
Soon as he ſaid, my Miſtreſs and my Wife,
Do what you liſt, the Term of all your Life:
I took to Heart the Merits of the Cauſe,
And ſtood content to rule by wholeſome Laws;
Receiv'd the Reins of abſolute Command,
With all the Government of Houſe and Land,
And Empire o'er his Tongue, and o'er his Hand.
As for the Volume that revil'd the Dames,
'Twas torn to Fragments, and condemn'd to Flames.

Now Heav'n on all my Husbands gone, bestow
Pleasures above, for Tortures felt below:
That Rest they wish'd for, grant them in the Grave,
And bless those Souls my Conduct help'd to save!

TALE VIII.

DELIA'S WEDDING-NIGHT.

JOB curs'd the Day that gave him Birth,
And introduc'd an Age of Grief:
And shall I spend the Night in Mirth,
That fix'd my Fate beyond Relief?
Then cease my Presence to controul,
That must your Harmony destroy:
For Pain will rack my inmost Soul,
Amidst the splendid Form of Joy.
Neglect and Scorn tho' I could bear,
While yet for Hope you left me Room;
To hail the Date of my Despair,
Is worse than *Tantalus* his Doom.
The State was dreadful still to see,
Yet never taste, the Fruit inclin'd:
But had some Rival pluck'd the Tree,
With double Rage the Wretch had pin'd.

TALE

TALE IX.

On the same Occasion.

MY Friends expected me at seven:
I went; and *Delia* was offended.—
I might have staid, sure, till eleven,
Tho' Lords, nay Ladies, had attended!
Her Wedding-Night, and leave her so?
A mere Excuse, she plainly sees it!
Not drink her Health before I go?
Vastly oblig'd for such a Visit!
My Friends and I had Time enough:
She'd not have kept me till the Morning!
Which had she wanted, here was Proof,
I was not ready—without Warning.
She would not look upon that Man,
Who when she ask'd a Thing, refus'd it.——
Thus, without Mercy, on she ran:—
With all my Rhet'ric I excus'd it.
'Tis venial, sure, the worst you say,
From servile me, who live to please ye!
And to what Purpose could I stay,
My Sighs suppress'd, my Soul uneasy?

Diſtinguiſh'd from the reſt of Men,
Would you ſelect one Ev'ning for me;
If Friend or Foe ſhould move me then,
May all that's good and fair abhor me!
For, truſt me Girl! ſo far from true
Is what you hint in your Reproaches;
I would not miſs one Night with you,
For all the Nymphs that ride in Coaches!
Were I contended for between a
Queen, Princeſs, Marchioneſs, and Dutcheſs,
Auſtria's and *Muſcovy*'s Czarina,
I'd fly to you from all their Clutches!
Nay, had they Right to my Allegiance,
The moſt majeſtic ſhe (God ſave her!)
Should hang me up for Diſobedience,
Sooner than bribe me with her Favour!

TALE

TALE X.

The ELBOW-CHAIR;

FOLKS that are wickedly inclin'd,
To Modes of Vice are not confin'd.
Sir *Simon* with his Glass gets drunk:
His Butler sucks it thro' a Trunk.
So Women of the Town resort
As well to *Paul's*, as to the Court.
'Tis not the Instrument, or Place;
But only People's Want of Grace.

To

To ſet this Thought in proper Light,
One ſhort Example I'll recite.
Dear *Querno* pardon, if to thee
Of little Uſe my Tale ſhould be;
Who know'ſt of ſinning Faſhions plenty,
And for one Tale, canſt tell me Twenty.
Sir *Ralph* a Debauchee of Fame,
Had almoſt waſted all his Flame:
Which tho' his Helpmate found too true,
His am'rous Caſt ſo well ſhe knew,
That ſhe was ne'ertheleſs afraid
He'd ſtill be piddling with her Maid.
A Mind, ſhe thought, ſo us'd to roam,
Would ramble ſtill, tho' nearer Home;
And therefore, to prevent him there,
She always took peculiar Care,
That, whatſoever *Betty* did,
They ne'er ſhould meet too near a Bed.
The curſed Bed was all ſhe fear'd:
Of other Engine ſhe ne'er heard.
No Viſit would *Cautillo* pay,
No Pleaſure take, by Night or Day,
But all the Beds were made before,
And ſhe lock'd ev'ry Chamber-Door.
Her Dreſſing-Room ſhe never heeded;
There they might go for what they needed:
Nay, ſhe could truſt them any where,
Provided ſtill—no Bed was near.

Then,

Then, as all Humankind is frail;
And the moſt watchful once may fail;
As all we do may fruitleſs prove,
Without a Bleſſing from above;
She daily, at her Elbow-Chair,
Put up for him a ſep'rate Prayer,
That Heav'n would pleaſe to turn his Heart,
And make him from the Fleſh depart.

Nor did ſhe miſs, at proper Times,
To blacken all bad Women's Crimes;
And very gravely talk to *Betty*
(Who, by the Way, was young and pretty)
Of Chaſtity, and what a Shame
It was for Maids to do *That ſame.*

Here, were my Narrative compleat,
Much might my Friend expect to meet:
Deſcriptions of Sir *Ralpho's* Batteries,
As Preſents, Vows, Intrigues, and Flatteries;
How *Betty* came at laſt to yield;
How long his Worſhip kept the Field.
Strange Epiſodes might thus be mis'd,
More to be wonder'd at, than prais'd.
Shall we then lengthen out our Matter,
Or end our Tale?---I think, the latter.

The Pious always can't prevail;
Temptation's ſtrong, and Fleſh is frail:
In vain are all *Cautilla's* Cares;
In vain her Precepts, and her Pray'rs:

Betty

Betty grows fat, or else 'tis worse!
Cautilla taxes her—of Course.
What! *Betty*, has your Master done it?—
Yes! *Betty*'s Tears and Tremblings own it.—
Thou beastly Baggage, how came this?
Upon what Bed, pray, did you kiss?
Speak Hussey! Where had you the Key?
When did he do it? Speak, I say!
You lie with Men, you Slut you! Fie!—
I never did.——Strumpet, you lye!—
No;—I was sitting.——Sitting! where?—
Dear Madam, in your Elbow-Chair.—

I hope the Maxims here maintain'd,
Are now both strengthen'd and explain'd.
Could any human Means avail,
In what did poor *Cautilla* fail?
You'll say, she might have taken care,
And not have left her Elbow-Chair.
What then? was there no Method more?
Pray, could she take away the Floor?
Friend, had she known as much as you,
I'll warrant they'd have made it do:
You have, perhaps, a wiser Wife:
Did you ne'er cheat her in your Life?

TALE XI.

The ENGLISH-PADLOCK.

MISS *Danae*, when fair and young
(As *Horace* has divinely sung)
Cou'd not be kept from *Jove*'s Embrace
By Doors of Steel, and Walls of Brass.
The Reason of the Thing is clear;
Wou'd *Jove* the naked Truth aver:
Cupid was with him of the Party;
And shew'd himself sincere and hearty:
For, give that Whipster but his Errand;
He takes my Lord Chief Justice Warrant;
Dauntless as Death away he walks;
Breaks the Doors open; snaps the Locks;
Searches the Parlour, Chamber, Study;
Nor stops 'till he has *Culprit*'s Body.
Since this has been authentic Truth,
By Age deliver'd down to Youth;
Tell us, mistaken Husband, tell us,
Why so mysterious, why so jealous?
Does the Restraint, the Bolt, the Bar
Make us less curious, her less fair?
The Spy, which does this Treasure keep,
Does she ne'er say her Pray'rs, nor sleep?

Does

Betty grows fat, or else 'tis worse:
Cautilla taxes her—of Course.
What! *Betty*, has your Master done it?—
Yes! *Betty*'s Tears and Tremblings own it.—
Thou beastly Baggage, how came this?
Upon what Bed, pray, did you kiss?
Speak, Hussey! Where had you the Key?
When did he do it? Speak, I say!
You lie with Men, you Slut you! Fie!—
I never did.——Strumpet, you lye!—
No;—I was sitting.——Sitting! where?—
Dear Madam, in your Elbow-Chair.—

I hope the Maxims here maintain'd,
Are now both strengthen'd and explain'd.
Could any human Means avail,
In what did poor *Cautilla* fail?
You'll say, she might have taken care,
And not have left her Elbow-Chair.
What then? was there no Method more?
Pray, could she take away the Floor?
Friend, had she known as much as you,
I'll warrant they'd have made it do:
You have, perhaps, a wiser Wife:
Did you ne'er cheat her in your Life?

TALE

TALE XI.

The ENGLISH-PADLOCK.

MISS *Dance*, when fair and young
(As *Horace* has divinely ſung)
Cou'd not be kept from *Jove*'s Embrace
By Doors of Steel, and Walls of Braſs.
The Reaſon of the Thing is clear;
Wou'd *Jove* the naked Truth aver:
Cupid was with him of the Party;
And ſhew'd himſelf ſincere and hearty:
For, give that Whipſter but his Errand;
He takes my Lord Chief Juſtice Warrant;
Dauntleſs as Death away he walks;
Breaks the Doors open; ſnaps the Locks;
Searches the Parlour, Chamber, Study;
Nor ſtops 'till he has *Culprit*'s Body.
Since this has been authentic Truth,
By Age deliver'd down to Youth;
Tell us, miſtaken Huſband, tell us,
Why ſo myſterious, why ſo jealous?
Does the Reſtraint, the Bolt, the Bar
Make us leſs curious, her leſs fair?
The Spy, which does this Treaſure keep,
Does ſhe ne'er ſay her Pray'rs, nor ſleep?

Does

Does ſhe to no Exceſs incline?
Does ſhe fly Muſic, Mirth, and Wine?
Or have not Gold and Flatt'ry Pow'r,
To purchaſe one unguarded Hour?
Your Care does further yet extend:
That Spy is guarded by your Friend.——
But has this Friend nor Eye, nor Heart?
May he not feel the cruel Dart,
Which, ſoon or late, all Mortals feel?
May he not, with two tender Zeal,
Give the fair Pris'ner Cauſe to ſee,
How much he wiſhes, ſhe were free?
May he not craftily infer
The Rules of Friendſhip too ſevere,
Which chain him to a hated Truſt;
Which make him wretched, to be juſt?
And may not She, this Darling She,
Youthful and healthy, Fleſh and Blood,
Eaſy with him, ill-us'd by Thee,
Allow this Logic to be good?
Sir, will your Queſtions never end?
I truſt to neither Spy nor Friend.
In ſhort, I keep her from the Sight
Of ev'ry Human Face.——She'll write.
From Pen and Paper ſhe's debarr'd.——
Has ſhe a Bodkin and a Card?
She'll prick her Mind.——She will you ſay:
But how ſhall She that Mind convey?

I keep her in one Room: I lock it:
The Key (look here) is in this Pocket.
The Key-hole, is that left? Moſt certain.
She'll thruſt her Letter thro'——Sir *Martin*.
Dear angry Friend, what muſt be done?
Is there no Way?——There is but one.
Send her abroad; and let her ſee,
That all this mingled Maſs, which ſhe
Being forbidden longs to know,
Is a dull Farce, an empty Show,
Powder, and Pocket Glaſs, and Beau;
A Staple of Romance and Lies,
Falſe Tears, and real Perjuries:
Where Sighs and Looks are bought and ſold;
And Love is made but to be told:
Where the fat Bawd, and laviſh Heir
The Spoils of ruin'd Beauty ſhare:
And Youth ſeduc'd from Friends and Fame,
Muſt give up Age to Want and Shame.
Let her behold the Frantic Scene,
The Women wretched, falſe the Men:
And when, theſe certain Ills to ſhun,
She would to thy Embraces run;
Receive her with extended Arms:
Seem more delighted with her Charms:
Wait on her to the Park and Play:
Put on good Humour; make her gay:

Be to her Virtues very kind:
Be to her Faults a little blind:
Let all her Ways be unconfin'd:
And clap your *Padlock*——on her Mind.

TALE XII.

SIMPLE *SIMON*.

QUOTH *Simon* to *Thomas* (and ſhew'd him his Wife)
See *Thomas*! ſee here! the Delight of my Life.
Look at her again!—Did you ever behold
Such Sweetneſs, enſhrin'd in ſo charming a Mold?
For conjugal Virtue ſhe never had Peer:
To me, all engaging;—to others, ſevere.
But then to enjoy her! Good Gods! ſuch a Feaſt
Were fit for a Monarch,—or even a Prieſt.
Would ſhe but conſent, you ſhall taſte of the Bliſs.
This Man's my Acquaintance; *Sue*, grant him a Kiſs.
Sue yielded; and *Thomas* accepted the Grace:
The Huſband ſate by, and beheld the Embrace;
O'erjoy'd that his Wife would ſo far condeſcend,
As to honour her Spouſe, by obliging his Friend.
How ſuddenly *Cupid* can Poiſon impart!
It paſs'd thro' the Lips, and it tickled the Heart.
They

They ey'd one another with mutual Good-will;
And *Simon* commended his Moiety ſtill.
Friend *Thomas*, you'll viſit your Neighbour again?
Your Treatment ſhall always be hearty and plain.
From Eleven till Two I am daily at 'Change:
At any Time elſe Sir:—Pray, do not make ſtrange!
Tom promis'd: The Bottle went once more about,
And then they moſt courteouſly lighted him out.
Sue added her Compliment too at the Door:
My Huſband has mention'd the Time, Sir, before:
From Eleven till Two he is never at Home.——
I hope, Sir, you'll do us the Honour to come.
Tom's Words was repeated: The Senſe of the Promiſe
Appear'd in the Eyes of both *Suſan* and *Thomas*.
But *Simon* was blinded with Love of the Dame:—
If *Suſan* was viſited, "Who was to blame?"

TALE XIII.

The Middle-aged Man and his Two Miſtreſſes.

A Batchelor, more gay than ſage,
Near five and forty Years of Age,
Finding his Hair juſt turning gray,
Concluded, 'twas now Time of Day,

If e'er he married in his Life,
To look about him for a Wife.
A Man, like him, poſſeſs'd of Plenty,
Need never fear the Choice of Twenty.
Soon as he made the firſt Advances,
Many, no doubt, let fly their Glances.
But his Affections who could rifle;
Who, knowing Marriage was no Trifle,
Not raſhly would himſelf encumber?
However, two, among the Number,
Both Widows, rich, and independant,
Had o'er their Rivals gain'd th' Aſcendant.
Alike their Pow'r: Their Age appears
Alike,---not leſs than thirty Years.
Betwixt them both, in am'rous Play,
Our Suitor ſate, from Day to Day,
While they, on either Side the Chair,
Buſied themſelves about his Hair.
The ancient Matron, ev'ry Minute,
Pluck'd out the black Remainders in it:
But the young Gipſy turn'd her Spite
Againſt th' Encroachments of the White.
Well-match'd that People might behold her,
One wiſh'd him younger, t'other older:
And thus, in ſhort, went on Affairs,
Till they, betwixt 'em, ſhar'd his Hairs.
Grown bald and wiſe by this Expedient,
Ladies, quoth he, your moſt obedient.---

Ten thouſand Thanks I leave betwixt ye:
(Share them gay Thirty, and grave Sixty.)
Well have you taught one uſeful Truth,
Which I bequeath to Age and Youth.
Take which I pleaſe, the Caſe is equal;
Since each expects me, in the Sequel,
To live in her Way, not in mine,——
My Locks I chearfully reſign;
And keep myſelf, *Hymen*, adieu!
Fair Tut'reſs each, the ſame to you!

TALE XIV.

Sauntring JACK *and Idle* JOAN.

INTERR'D beneath this Marble Stone,
Lie ſaunt'ring *Jack*, and idle *Joan*.
While rolling threeſcore Years and one.
Did round this Globe their Courſes run;
If human Things went ill or well;
If changing Empires roſe or fell:
The Morning paſt, the Evening came,
And found this Couple ſtill the ſame.
They walk'd and eat, good Folks: What then?
Why then they walk'd and eat again:
They ſoundly ſlept the Night away:
They juſt did Nothing all the Day:

And having bury'd Children four,
Wou'd not take Pains to try for more.
Nor Sister either had, nor Brother;
They seem'd just tally'd for each other.
Their Moral and Œconomy
Most perfectly they made agree:
Each Virtue kept its proper Bound,
Nor trespass'd on the other's Ground.
Nor Fame, nor Censure they regarded:
They neither punish'd, nor rewarded.
He car'd not what the Footmen did:
Her Maids she neither prais'd, nor chid:
So ev'ry Servant took his Course:
And bad at first, they all grew worse.
Slothful Disorder fill'd his Stable;
And sluttish Plenty deck'd her Table.
Their Beer was strong; their Wine was *Port*;
Their Meal was large; their Grace was short.
They gave the Poor the Remnant-meat,
Just when it grew not fit to eat.
They paid the Church and Parish Rate;
And took, but read not the Receit:
For which they claim their *Sunday*'s Due,
Of slumb'ring in an upper Pew.
No Man's Defects sought they to know;
So never made themselves a Foe.
No Man's good Deeds did they commend;
So never rais'd themselves a Friend.

Nor cheriſh'd they Relations poor:
That might decreaſe their preſent Store:
Nor Barn nor Houſe did they repair;
That might oblige their future Heir.
They neither added, nor confounded:
They neither wanted, nor abounded.
Each *Chriſtmas* they Accompts did clear:
And wound their Bottom round the Year.
Nor Tear, nor Smile did they imploy.
At News of public Grief, or Joy.
When Bells were rung, and Bonfires made;
If aſk'd, they ne'er deny'd their Aid:
Their Jugg was to the Ringer carry'd;
Who ever either dy'd, or marry'd.
Their Billet at the Fire was foand;
Who ever was depos'd, or crown'd.
Nor good, nor bad, nor fools, nor wiſe;
They wou'd not learn, nor cou'd adviſe:
Without Love, Hatred, Joy, or Fear,
They led—a kind of——as it were:
Nor wiſh'd, nor car'd, nor laugh'd, nor cry'd:
And ſo they liv'd, and ſo they dy'd.

TALE

TALE XV.

TRUTH *and* FALSHOOD.

ONCE on a Time, in Sun-shine Weather,
Falshood and *Truth* walk'd out together,
The neighb'ring Woods and Lawns to view,
As Opposites will sometimes do,
Thro' many a blooming Mead they past,
And at a Brook arriv'd at last,
The purling Stream, the Margin green,
With Flow'rs bedeck'd, a vernal Scene,
Invited each itin'rant Maid
To rest a while beneath the Shade;
Under a spreading Beach they sat,
And pass'd the Time with Female Chat;
Whilst each her Character maintain'd;
One spoke her Thoughts, the *Other* feign'd.
At length quoth *Falshood*, Sister *Truth*,
For so she call'd her from her Youth,
What if, to shun yon sultry Beam,
We bathe in this delightful Stream;
The Bottom smooth, the Water clear,
And there's no prying Shepherd near?
With all my Heart, the Nymph reply'd,
And threw her snowy Robes aside,

Stript

Stript herſelf naked to the Skin,
And with a Spring leapt headlong in.
Falſhood more leiſurely undreſt,
And laying by her taudry Veſt,
Trick'd herſelf out in *Truth*'s Array,
And croſs the Meadows tript away;
From this curſt Hour, the *Fraudful* Dame
Of ſacred *Truth* uſurps the Name,
And with a vile, perfidious Mind,
Roams far and near to cheat Mankind;
Falſe Sighs ſuborns, and artful Tears,
And ſtarts with vain pretended Fears;
In Viſits, ſtill appears moſt wiſe,
And rolls at Church her Saint-like Eyes;
Talks very much, plays idle Tricks,
While riſing Stock her Conſcience pricks;
When being, poor Thing, extremely gravel'd,
She Secrets ope'd, and all unravel'd.
But on ſhe will, and Secrets tell
Of *John* and *Joan*, and *Ned* and *Nell*,
Reviling ev'ry one ſhe knows,
As Fancy leads, beneath the Roſe.
Her Tongue ſo voluble and kind,
It always runs before her Mind;
As Times do ſerve ſhe ſlily pleads,
And copious Tears ſtill ſhew her Needs,
With Promiſes as thick as Weeds.——

Speaks

Speaks *pro* and *con*, is wond'rous civil;
To-day a *Saint*, to-morrow *Devil*.
Poor *Truth* ſhe ſtript, as has been ſaid,
And naked left the lovely *Maid*,
Who ſcorning from her Cauſe to wince,
Has gone ſtark-naked ever ſince;
And ever *naked* will appear,
Belov'd by *All* who *Truth* revere.

TALE XVI.

BAUCIS *and* PHILEMON.

IN antient Times, as Story tells,
The Saints would often leave their Cells,
And ſtrole about, but hide their Quality,
To try good People's Hoſpitality.
It happen'd on a Winter Night,
As Authors of the Legend write;
Two Brother Hermits, Saints by Trade,
Taking their Tour in Maſquerade,
Diſguis'd in tatter'd Habits went
To a ſmall Village down in *Kent*;
Where, in the Strollers canting Strain,
They begg'd from Door to Door in vain,
Try'd ev'ry Tone might Pity win,
But not a Soul would let 'em in.

Our

Our wand'ring Saints in woful State,
Treated at this ungodly Rate,
Having through all this Village paſt,
To a ſmall Cottage came at laſt,
Where dwelt a good old honeſt Yeoman,
Call'd in the Neighbourhood, *Philemon*,
Who kindly did the Saints invite
In his poor Hut to paſs that Night;
And then the hoſpitable Sire
Bid Goody *Baucis* mend the Fire;
While he from out the Chimney took
A Flitch of Bacon off the Hook,
And freely from the fatteſt Side
Cut out large Slices to be fry'd:
Then ſtept aſide to fetch 'em Drink,
Fill'd a large Jug up to the Brink,
And ſaw it fairly twice go round;
Yet (what is wonderful) they found
'Twas ſtill repleniſh'd to the Top,
As if they ne'er had touch'd a Drop:
The good old Couple was amaz'd,
And often on each other gaz'd;
For both were frighted to the Heart,
And juſt began to cry——What art!
Then ſoftly turn'd aſide to view
Whether the Lights were burning blue.
The gentle Pilgrims ſoon aware on't,
Told 'em their Calling and their Errant:

Good

Good Folks, you need not be afraid,
We are but Saints, the Hermits ſaid:
No Hurt ſhall come to you or yours;
But, for that Pack of churliſh Boors,
Not fit to live on Chriſtian Ground,
They and their Houſes ſhall be drown'd;
Whilſt you ſhall ſee your Cottage riſe,
And grow a Church before your Eyes.
They ſcarce had ſpoke; when, fair and ſoft,
The Roof began to mount aloft;
Aloft roſe ev'ry Beam and Rafter,
The heavy Wall climb'd ſlowly after.
The Chimney widen'd, and grew higher,
Became a Steeple with a Spire.
The Kettle to the Top was hoiſt,
And there ſtood faſten'd to a Joiſt;
But with the Upſide down, to ſhow
Its Inclination for below.
In vain, for a ſuperior Force,
Apply'd at Bottom, ſtops in Courſe.
Doom'd ever in Suſpenſe to dwell;
'Tis now no Kettle, but a Bell.
A wooden Jack, which had almoſt
Loſt, by Diſuſe, the Art to roaſt,
A ſudden Alteration feels,
Increas'd by new inteſtine Wheels;
And what exalts the Wonder more,
The Number made the Motion ſlow'r:

The Flyer, though't had leaden Feet,
Turn'd round ſo quick, you ſcarce cou'd ſee't;
But ſlacken'd by ſome ſecret Pow'r,
Now hardly moves an Inch an Hour.
The Jack and Chimney near ally'd,
Had never left each other's Side;
The Chimney to a Steeple grown,
The Jack would not be left alone;
But up againſt the ſteeple rear'd,
Became a Clock, and ſtill adher'd:
And ſtill its Love to Houſhold Cares,
By a ſhrill Voice, at Noon declares,
Warning the Cook-maid not to burn
That Roaſt-meat which it cannot turn.

The groaning Chair began to crawl,
Like a huge Snail, along the Wall;
There ſtuck aloft, in public View,
And, with ſmall Change, a Pulpit grew.

The Porringers, that in a Row
Hung high and made a glitt'ring Show,
To a leſs noble Subſtance chang'd,
Were now but leathern Buckets rang'd.

The Ballads paſted on the Wall,
Of *Joan* of *France*, and *Engliſh Moll*,
Fair Roſamond, and *Robin Hood*,
The little Children in the Wood;
Now ſeem'd to look Abundance better,
Improv'd in Pictures, Size, and Letter;

And, high in Order plac'd, deſcribe
The Heraldry of ev'ry Tribe.
A Bedſtead of the Antique Mode,
Compact of Timber many a Load,
Such as our Anceſtors did uſe,
Was metamorphos'd into Pews;
Which ſtill their antient Nature keep,
By lodging Folks diſpos'd to Sleep.
The Cottage, by ſuch Feats as theſe,
Grown to a Church by juſt Degrees,
The Hermits then deſir'd their Hoſt,
To aſk for what he fancy'd moſt.
PHILEMON, having paus'd a-while,
Return'd 'em Thanks in homely Stile:
Then ſaid; my Houſe is grown ſo fine,
Methinks, I ſtill would call it mine:
I'm old, and fain would live at Eaſe,
Make me the Parſon, if you pleaſe.
He ſpoke, and preſently he feels
His Grazier's Coat fall down his Heels;
He ſees, yet hardly can believe,
About each Arm a Pudding Sleeve:
His Waiſtcoat to a Caſſock grew,
And both aſſum'd a Sable Hue;
But being old, continu'd juſt
As thread-bare, and as full of Duſt.
His Talk was now of Tythes and Dues,
Could ſmoak his Pipe and read the News;

Knew

Knew how to preach old Sermons next,
Vampt in the Preface and the Text;
At Chriſt'nings well could act his Part,
And had the Service all by Heart;
Wiſh'd Women might have Children faſt,
And thought whoſe Sow had farrow'd laſt;
Againſt Diſſenters would repine,
And ſtood up firm for *Right Divine*.
Found his Head fill'd with many a Syſtem,
But Claſſic Authors——he ne'er miſs'd 'em.
Thus having furbiſh'd up a Parſon,
Dame *Baucis* next they play'd their Farce on:
Inſtead of home-ſpun Coifs, were ſeen
Good Pinners edg'd with *Colberteen*;
Her Petticoat transform'd apace,
Became black Sattin, flounc'd with Lace.
Plain *Goody* would no longer down,
'Twas *Madam*, in her Grogram Gown.
Philemon was in great Surprize,
And hardly could believe his Eyes,
Amaz'd to ſee her look ſo prim;
And ſhe admir'd as much at him.
Thus happy, in their Change of Life,
Were ſeveral Years this Man and Wife;
When on a Day, which prov'd their laſt,
Diſcourſing on old Stories paſt,
They went, by chance, amidſt their Talk,
To the Church-yard, to take a Walk;

When *Baucis* haſtily cry'd out,
My Dear, I ſee your Forehead ſprout.
Sprout, quoth the Man, What's this you tell us?
I hope you don't believe me jealous;
But yet, methinks, I feel it true;
And truly your's is budding too—
Nay, now I cannot ſtir my Foot;
It feels as if 'twere taking Root—
Deſcription would but tire my Muſe;
In ſhort, they both were turn'd to *Ews*,
Old Goodman *Dobſon* of the Green,
Remembers he the Trees has ſeen;
He'll talk of them from Noon 'till Night,
And goes with Folks to ſee the Sight.
On Sundays, after Ev'ning Pray'r,
He gathers all the Pariſh there;
Points out the Place of either *Ew*,
Here *Baucis*, there *Philemon* grew:
'Till once a Parſon of our Town,
To mend his Barn, cut *Baucis* down:
At which, 'tis hard to be believ'd,
How much the other Tree was griev'd,
Grew ſcrubby, dy'd a-Top, was ſtunted;
So the next Parſon ſtubb'd and burnt it.

TALE

TALE XVII.

The CONSCIENTIOUS KEEPER.

WHEN Men have honeſt Wives at Home,
Yet take the Liberty to roam;
They can't with too much Caution act,
In keeping cloſe an amorous Fact.
'Tis not enough to hide their Sin
From all, but thoſe concern'd therein:
From even thoſe they ſhould conceal
What may the Crime of both reveal.

Thomas, I truſt will not miſtake me:
Yet, if Example plainer make me,
Dick Daventer, my *quondam* Friend,
This Propoſition ſhall defend.
Dick hits our Purpoſe to the Life:
Dick went aſtray, yet had a Wife.

This Friend of mine was briſk and young;
Well built, and conſequently ſtrong:
Yet (to his Honour be it heard)
What Strength he had, he never ſpar'd.
His Wife at all Times would agree,
(And who could know ſo well as ſhe?)
That, take him early, take him late,
He was a good Pains-taking Mate.
In vain, alas! no Fruit appears,
To crown his Toil, in thrice three Years!
O Fate ſevere! no hopeful Child
Upon th' induſtrious Parent ſmil'd!

Dick with Submiſſion bore his Lot,
And cheriſh'd ſcarce an evil Thought.
No;—If 'twere Providence's Will,
He'd live contented, childleſs, ſtill!
For, let his Foes lay what they can,
Dick was a very pious Man:
His Manners were correctly nice;
He went to Church o' *Sundays* twice;
And would not do an evil Thing
To make himſelf *Great Britain*'s King.

Alas! it grieves my Soul to tell
How into *Trulla's* Snare he fell!
How, sailing home, late, by himself,
His Vessel stranded on her Shelf!
Stand off, my Friend; discard, and kick her;
In vain I wish! my Friend's in Liquor.
Her Arts prevail; she draws him in
To act th' abominable Sin:
To promise, at a proper Time,
To come, and to repeat the Crime!
When once our Innocence we stain,
Spot follows Spot, like Drops of Rain.
Next Morning *Dick* cons o'er and o'er
The Follies of the Night before.
Could he those Minutes but recall,
He'd freely sacrifice his All!
He'll go no more. But then his Vow!
To break it Honour won't allow.
On all th' Intentions of his Word
He very learnedly demurr'd.
Will Time, Condition, Person, Place,
Afford no *Salvo* in this Case?
An Pellici servanda Fides?
Yes:—Reason on th' affirming Side is,
A Promise should be sacred still:
Made when, where, or to whom it will.
Truth's Arguments at length prevail;
(Some Inclination in the Scale.)

They

They meet again; get more acquainted:
Again: Freſh Meetings are appointed.
In ſhort, they met and met ſo long,
(To haſten forwards with my Song)
That he was her's, and ſhe was his;
A downright Keeper, and his Miſs.

Long Converſation Freedom breeds,
Encroaching *Trulla* interceeds
To know her dear Deceiver's Name;
Where now he lives; from whence he came;
Whether a married Man, or ſingle;
With fifty Things that will not jingle;
Which Women will on Men intrude,
Where theſe are fond, and thoſe are rude.

His Love for Truth *Dick* ſtill retains,
And therefore takes a World of Pains
To anſwer her with Half a Lye:
(An Anſwer he could not deny)
Yet ſo as ſhe might never find
The true Intention of his Mind.

Firſt, *Daniel Doubtful* was his Name;
(Th' initial Letters ſtill the ſame)
And, for the future, ſhe ſhould ſee
His Billets all ſubſcrib'd, D. D.

His native Place, a Town of Note,
In *Berkſhire*, thirty Miles remote;
He call'd by Name, and told the Diſtance;
Then brought in *Kent* to his Aſſiſtance.

His

His Dwelling was on *London* Side;
Not far from where *Thames* rolls his Tide.
He nam'd the *Thames*, the Sign, the Street,
Set off with Circumstances meet:
Yet, in Conclusion, mine'd the Matter,
By placing all across the Water.

But Marriage was so firm a Noose,
How could he play at fast and loose?
He has no Child:—Ay, there's his Hold!
Trulla must artfully be told,
That Wedlock once had been his Scope,
But, ah! the Girl had baulk'd his Hope:
That now the antient *Doubtful* Stem,
'Twas thought, would terminate in him.
How happy should he be, to prove,
By marrying her, his faithful Love;
Those dying Honours to revive,
And leave on Earth his Name alive.

What further Questions *Trulla* ask'd,
How cautious *Dick* his Answers mask'd,
We leave. In short, such Shifts appear,
Trulla perceives him insincere:
Yet, tho' she found her Spark in Jest,
Words were too warily express'd,
She truly thought, to be but Wind:
She therefore bore them all in Mind;
Resolv'd a proper Time to wait,
And, if worth while, to forge the Bait.

Profuse

Profuse abroad, at-home still just,
Nor Wife, nor Miſtreſs need miſtruſt:
Each, when ſhe wanted, had a Shilling;
Neither knew more than *Dick* was willing:
Till waiting once on Miſs, as uſual,
He brings a Book for her Peruſal.
Says he, theſe Poems, ev'ry Line,
Were written by a Couz of mine;
A Fellow of uncommon Parts;
Well ſkill'd in ſundry of the Arts.
The Title of the Pamphlet tells
His Name, and Trade, and where he dwells.
Trulla with Thanks receives the Preſent,
Nor doubts to read *Dick*'s myſtic Ways in't.
The truſtieſt of her private Friends
She to this Poet's Lodging ſends;
Inſtructed how to act and ſpeak;
Intreated large Remarks to make.
He goes; he rallies all his Senſe;
And, Sir, I hope 'tis no Offence!
I ſaw your Book; admire your Wit;
And come to talk concerning it.
Pray, won't you pleaſe to take a Glaſs?
—I ſhould be glad an Hour to paſs.
The Bard complies, with Heart elate.
Heav'ns! to be follow'd at this Rate!
How great a Man! They drink and ſmoke;
Talk common Things; and paſs a Joke;
Till,

Till,—Pray Sir, have you no Relations?——
Yes.—What may be their Names, and Stations?
Where do they dwell? What Sort of Men?——
The Poet mentions nine or ten;
Their Names, their Age, their Size, how dreſs'd;
Dick Daventer among the reſt.
The Plot unravels now apace:
Trulla's Acquaintance tells the Caſe:
The Couſin's Story ſtronger brings
Dick's own diſguis'd Account of Things;
And, as the joint Deſcription ran,
'Twas plain, he was the very Man.
'Tis eaſy to conceive the reſt;
How artful *Trulla* Rage expreſs'd;
(To make him with more Warmth ſalute her,
And uſe her better for the future.)
Impoſe on her! ſhe'd have him know
He was the firſt that ſerv'd her ſo!
She had, indeed, been much too kind:
The worſe Luck her's; tho' Love is blind!
Her's all were honourable Views!
The more Knave he, ſuch Love t' abuſe!
But *Dick*, grown cautious by Experience,
Could not be drawn to freſh Coherence.
He knew his Credit was at Stake,
What Uſe of this the Bard would make;
So in the Miſchief firſt appears,
E're the Houſe falls about his Ears:

With

With deep Contrition, to his Wife,
Owns ev'ry Error of his Life:
Together all the Parties bring;
And publicly *Peccavi* sings.
Contented with the present Game,
The Poet vows to spare his Fame.
Trulla was willing to be gone,
At naming *Bridewell*, and Sir *John*:
And Madam, for the Sake of both,
Pardons this Breach of Marriage Troth.

Perhaps I write to one so wicked,
He daily does as bad as *Dick* did;
But of these Doings who can tax him?
He well observes that prudent Maxim,
(Already rym'd at our Beginning)
" Observe a Manner ev'n in Sinning!
" If you must rove, mind what you do!
" Why will you lose your Honour too?
To this grand Principle or thine,
Shall I, dear *Tom*, add one of mine!
'Tis the Result of much Reflection,
And shews the Beauty of Perfection.

A Man may hope, but hopes in vain,
To live in Vice, yet Truth maintain.
Who goes astray, should never stick
Just half-way o'er, like sheepish *Dick*;
But boldly flounce thro' Thin and Thick.

A Slip once made, you cannot mend it:
So well reflect, when you intend it,
What Work muſt follow, to defend it.
And if, to ward off all Conviction,
You dare not prove a Contradiction;
Reſolve, tho' guilty, not to fall,
But forward puſh, Oaths, Lyes, and all;
Faith, e'en live honeſt all your Life,
And kiſs no Creature but your Wife!
Your harden'd Rogues are always Winners:
The Scandal falls on half-fac'd Sinners.

But—'tis the Failing of Beginners!
(Note, by the Way, I don't intend
To charge this Failing on my Friend.)
In Politics, who is not hearty,
Hath ſmall Regard from either Party:
Againſt your Clan, on no Pretence,
You dare admit ev'n Common Senſe.
Thus with your Churchmen and Diſſenters,
The Man who rails at all Adventures.
Stickles for ev'ry Point diſputed,
But never deigns to be confuted;
He, only he, obtains Reſpect,
And ſtands for one of God's Elect.
While all your ſober mod'rate Fellows,
Who think them both a Grain too zealous,
Thoſe Deiſts, Atheiſts, Devils, No-Church,
Are damn'd by High-Court, and by Low-Church.

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While all your ſober mod'rate Fellows,
Who think them both a Grain too zealous,
Thoſe Deiſts, Atheiſts, Devils, No-Church,
Are damn'd by High-Court, and by Low-Church.

When *Israel*'s Schism was on the Tapis,
Who stoutly stood for *God* or *Apis*,
Was held an *Israelite* indeed:
But he who halted (All agreed)
Betwixt *Jerusalem* and *Bethel*,
Whate'er his Morals, prov'd his Faith ill.
For then, as now, the Saints confest
This single Principle was best;
" Cleave to the Temple, or the Calves:
" The Devil wont be serv'd by Halves.

TALE XVIII.

The Original of MATRIMONY.

WHEN first Procreation began,
E're Forms interrupted the Bliss,
Each Woman might love any Man,
Each Man any Woman might kiss.
The Youth, who beheld a plump Lass,
Declar'd in few Words his Request;
Nor whin'd like an amorous Ass,
Nor ever departed unblest.
The Girl, who was ripe for the Game,
Look'd out for a sizeable Lad;
Then frankly discover'd her Flame,
And what she demanded, she had.

But while they thus revell'd at large,
And Bantlings increas'd in their Kind,
The Mother ſtill bore all the Charge:——
The Father what Mortal could find?
So when Great *Semiramis* reign'd,
And Women repin'd at their Lot,
The Queen Matrimony ordain'd,
That each might maintain what he got.
While under this Petticoat Rule,
The Men were oblig'd to ſubmit:
The Wife went abroad, and the Fool
Still own'd all that came to his Net.
The Men on this Syſtem refin'd
They granted the Union for Life:
But made (their chaſte Spouſes to bind)
The Huſband the Head of the Wife.
Tradition eſtabliſh'd the Cheat:
(Tradition makes all Things divine!)
It aw'd the dull Crowd; but the Great
What Precept could ever confine?
The ſacred Law-givers of Yore,
And all the old Sages of *Greece*,
Could ſlily diſpenſe with a Score;
Tho' others had but one a-piece.
'Twas thought for the Good of Mankind;
So into the Canons it paſs'd:
The Mob will for ever be blind;
And therefore 'tis likely to laſt.

Still may the Decrees of the State,
Impose on an Ignorant Realm:
Let us our own Charter create,
And do as they do at the Helm.
When one has the Beauty to charm,
And t'other the Manhood to please,
In Love can there be any Harm,
Arising from Motives like these?

TALE XIX.

FEMALE VIRTUE.

WHO ever met with, in his Life,
Or ever heard of, Woman,
So strictly virtuous, Maid or Wife,
As to be won by no Man?
You think this Question mighty queer:
But let me state it stronger;
Who e'er pursu'd one Nymph a Year,
And found her stubborn longer?
They always melt when Vigour bleeds,
And think it Shame that Beauty,
When Nature warmly intercedes,
Should persevere in Duty.

What

What then! are there no virtuous Dames?
Yes, doubtleſs, to Redundance:
Betwixt *New-River-Head* and *Thames*,
You have them in Abundance.
The Senſe of this muſt you be taught?
Obſerve how plain I make it!
They never give their Lovers aught;
They only let them take it.

TALE XX.

SUSANNAH and the two ELDERS.

WHEN Fair *Suſannah*, in a cool Retreat
Of ſhady Arbours ſhunn'd the ſultry Heat,
Two wanton Letchers to her Garden came,
And, ruſhing furious, ſeiz'd the trembling Dame.
What Female Strength could do, her Arms perform,
And guarded well the Fort they ſtrove to ſtorm.
The Story's antient, and (if rightly told)
Young was the Lady, but the Lovers Old.
Had the Reverſe been true! had Authors ſung,
How that the Dame was old, the Lovers young!
If ſhe had then the blooming Pair deny'd,
With tempting Youth and Vigour on their Side,
Lord! how the Story would have ſhock'd my Creed!
For that had been a Miracle indeed.

TALE XXI.

LOVE *Disarm'd.*

BENEATH a Myrtle's verdant Shade
As *Chloe* half asleep was laid,
Cupid perch'd lightly on her Breast,
And in that Heav'n desir'd to rest:
Over her Paps his Wings he spread;
Between he found a downy Bed,
And nestl'd in his little Head.

Still lay the God: The Nymph surpriz'd,
Yet Mistress of her self, devis'd,
How she the Vagrant might inthral,
And captive him, who captives all.

Her Bodice half way she unlac'd,
About his Arms she slily cast
The silken Bond, and held him fast.

The God awak'd; and thrice in vain
He strove to break the cruel Chain;
And thrice in vain he shook his Wing,
Incumber'd in the silken String.

Flutt'ring the God, and weeping said,
Pity poor *Cupid*, generous Maid,
Who happen'd, being blind, to stray,
And on thy Bosom lost his Way!

Who

Who ſtray'd, alas! but knew too well,
He never there muſt hope to dwell.
Set an unhappy Priſ'ner free,
Who ne'er intended Harm to thee.
To me pertains not, ſhe replies,
To know or care where *Cupid* flies;
What are his Haunts, or which his Way;
Where he would dwell, or whither ſtray:
Yet will I never ſet thee free:
For Harm was meant, and Harm to me.
Vain Fears that vex thy Virgin Heart:
I'll give up thee my Bow and Dart:
Untangle but this cruel Chain,
And freely let me fly again.
Agreed: Secure my Virgin Heart:
Inſtant give up thy Bow and Dart:
The Chain I'll in Return unty;
And freely thou again ſhall fly.
Thus ſhe the Captive did deliver;
The Captive thus gave up his Quiver.
The God diſarm'd, e'er ſince that Day
Paſſes his Life in harmleſs Play;
Flies round, or ſits upon her Breaſt,
A little, flutt'ring, idle Gueſt.
Ee'r ſince that Day the beauteous Maid
Governs the World in *Cupid*'s ſtead;
Directs his Arrow as ſhe wills;
Gives Grief, or Pleaſure; ſpares, or kills.

TALE

TALE XXII.

VERTUMNUS and POMONA.

THE fair *Pomona* flouriſh'd in his Reign;
Of all the Virgins of the ſylvan Train,
None taught the Trees a nobler Race to bear,
Or more improv'd the vegetable Care.
To her the ſhady Grove, the flow'ry Field, [yield:
The Streams and Fountains, no Delights could
'Twas all her Joy the ripening Fruits to tend,
And ſee the Boughs with happy Burthens bend.
The Hook ſhe bore inſtead of *Cynthia*'s Spear,
To lop the Growth of the luxuriant Year,
To decent Form the lawleſs Shoots to bring,
And teach th' obedient Branches where to ſpring.
Now the cleft Rind inſerted Graffs receives,
And yields an Offspring more than Nature gives;
Now ſliding Streams the thirſty Plants renew,
And feed their Fibres with reviving Dew.

Theſe Cares alone her virgin Breaſt employ,
Averſe from *Venus* and the nuptial Joy.
Her private Orchards, wall'd on every Side,
To lawleſs Sylvans all Acceſs deny'd.
How oft the Satyrs and the wanton Fawns,
Who haunt the Foreſts, or frequent the Lawns,

The

The God whose Ensign scares the Birds of Prey,
And old *Silenus*, youthful in Decay,
Employ'd their Wiles, and unavailing Care,
To pass the Fences, and surprise the Fair?
Like these, *Vertumnus* own'd his faithful Flame,
Like these, rejected by the scornful Dame.
To gain her Sight, a thousand Forms he wears,
And first a Reaper from the Field appears,
Sweating he walks, while Loads of golden Grain
O'ercharge the Shoulders of the seeming Swain.
Oft o'er his Back a crooked Scythe is laid,
And Wreaths of Hay his Sun-burnt Temples shade:
Oft' in his harden'd Hand a Goad he bears,
Like one who late unyok'd the sweating Steers,
Sometimes his pruning Hook corrects the Vines,
And the loose Straglers to their Ranks confines.
Now gath'ring what the bounteous Year allows,
He pulls ripe Apples from the bending Boughs.
A Soldier now, he with his Sword appears;
A Fisher next, his trembling Angle bears;
Each Shape he varies, and each Art he tries,
On her bright Charms to feast his longing Eyes.
A female Form at last *Vertumnus* wears,
With all the Marks of rev'rend Age appears,
His Temples thinly spread with silver Hairs;
Prop'd on his Staff, and stooping as he goes,
A painted Mitre shades his furrow'd Brows.

The

The God, in this decrepit Form array'd,
The Gardens enter'd, and the Fruits survey'd,
And "happy you! (he thus address'd the Maid)
"Whose Charms as far all other Nymphs outshine,
"As other Gardens are excell'd by thine!
Then kiss'd the Fair; (his Kisses warmer grow
Than such as Women on their Sex bestow.)
Then plac'd beside her on the flow'ry Ground,
Beheld the Trees with Autumn's Bounty crown'd.
An Elm was near, to whose Embraces led,
The curling Vine her swelling Clusters spread:
He view'd their twining Branches with Delight,
And prais'd the Beauty of the pleasing Sight.
Yet this tall Elm, but for his Vine (he said)
Had stood neglected, and a barren Shade;
And this fair Vine, but that her Arms surround
Her marry'd Elm, had crept along the Ground.
Ah! beauteous Maid, let this Example move
Your Mind, averse from all the Joys of Love.
Deign to be lov'd, and every Heart subdue!
What Nymph cou'd e'er attract such Crouds as you?
Not she whose Beauty urg'd the *Centaurs* Arms,
Ulysses' Queen, nor *Helen's* fatal Charms.
Ev'n now, when silent Scorn is all they gain,
A thousand court you, tho' they court in vain,
A thousand Sylvans, Demigods, and Gods,
That haunt our Mountains and our *Alban* Woods.

But

But if you'll prosper, mark what I advise,
Whom Age, and long Experience render wise,
And one whose tender Care is far above
All that these Lovers ever felt of Love,
(Far more than e'er can by your self be guest)
Fix on *Vertumnus*, and reject the Rest.
For his firm Faith I dare engage my own;
Scarce to himself, himself is better known.
To distant Lands *Vertumnus* never roves;
Like you, contented with his native Groves;
Nor at first Sight, like most, admires the Fair;
For you he lives; and you alone shall share
His last Affection, as his early Care.
Besides, he's lovely far above the rest,
With Youth immortal, and with Beauty blest.
Add, that he varies ev'ry Shape with Ease,
And tries all Forms that may *Pomona* please.
But what should most excite a mutual Flame,
Your rural Cares, and Pleasures, are the same:
To him your Orchards early Fruits are due,
(A pleasing Off'ring when 'tis made by you)
He values these; but yet (alas) complains,
That still the best and dearest Gift remains.
Not the fair Fruit that on yon Branches glows
With that ripe red th' autumnal Sun bestows;
Nor tasteful Herbs that in these Gardens rise,
Which the kind Soil with milky Sap supplies;

You,

You, only you, can move the God's Desire:
Oh crown so constant and so pure a Fire!
Let soft Compassion touch your gentle Mind;
Think, 'tis *Vertumnus* begs you to be kind!
So may no Frost, when early Buds appear,
Destroy the Promise of the youthful Year;
Nor Winds, when first your florid Orchard blows,
Shake the light Blossoms from their blasted Boughs!

This when the various God had urg'd in vain,
He strait assum'd his native Form again;
Such, and so bright an Aspect now he bears,
As when thro' Clouds th' emerging Sun appears,
And thence exerting his refulgent Ray,
Dispels the Darkness, and reveals the Day.
Force he prepar'd, but check'd the rash Design;
For when, appearing in a Form divine,
The Nymph surveys him, and beholds the Grace
Of charming Features, and a youthful Face;
In her soft breast consenting Passions move,
And the warm Maid confess'd a mutual Love.

TALE

TALE XXIII.

SAYING *and* DOING *are* TWO THINGS.

A Pleaſant Tale in ſerious Works
(For ſolid Reaſons) often lurks:
A Tale can ſeldom come amiſs:
The Art of Preaching gives us This.
What Characters become the Pulpit,
What Prieſt may edify a full Pit,

'Twill teach us better, at one View,
Than all the Rules it's Author knew.
To Thee my Verſion I ſubmit,
O *Balaam*, Judge of carnal Wit!
For Sanctity tho' ſkill'd to paint,
In Fact we count thee no great Saint;
But trace the Mazes of the Joke
Up to thy Caſſock, from thy Cloke.
Thy Cloke, had it been warm and ſnug,
Tho' deem'd as homely as a Rug,
It ſcarce had dropp'd among thy People,
For the gay Livery of the Steeple.
So much by Way of *Apparatus*:
Thalia, now the Tale tranſlate us.
A Country Prieſt, of ſpecial Note
For Leathern Lungs, and Brazen Throat,
Had got the Knack to draw Reſpect
From Folks of feeble Intellect;
And, without Learning, Wit or Art,
To work on each old Woman's Heart.
For, ſpite of Eloquence and Senſe,
(To which ſome Prieſts have juſt Pretence,)
The Preacher whom the Mob adores,
Is not who reaſons,—but who roars.
His Audience thicken'd ev'ry *Sunday*;
Nor would he diſappoint them one Day;
Nor on a ſlight Occaſion fail
To introduce his dark Detail

Of

Of all the Vices of the Times;
Bell'wing ſo loud about our Crimes,
That *Peters*, *Bradbury*, and *Burgeſs*,
Were not more truly *Boanerges*.
'Twas once his Fortune, near the Court,
To preach before the better Sort.
Ev'n here the Temple was too ſtreight:
Coach after Coach unloads its Freight.
Scarce any Preacher e'er beheld
A Place ſo large, ſo amply fill'd:
They throng'd the Windows and the Porch;
The Ladies fainted in the Church:
In ſhort, the Sexton now declares,
(And he remembers forty Years)
That, tho' he oft' had ſeen it crouded,
This *Sunday* all the *Sundays* out-did.
Not more the Houſe of God was haunted,
When *Whitfield* begg'd, or You recanted.
(The Man to whom we ſend a Poem,
We oft' ſalute, by turning to him.)
Our Doctor roll'd his Eyes around,
With Signs of Gravity profound.
He ſtroak'd his Face; he took his Text;
Made ev'ry Member unperplex'd:
Then all his Batteries apply'd,
To knock down Luxury and Pride.
In all their Forms he theſe engag'd;
But ſeem'd at Coaches moſt enrag'd;

Dreſs on Humility encroaches;
Yet Dreſs was not ſo bad as Coaches.
A Coach, that eaſy Chair to Vice!
That Bauble of the vain and nice!
To keep one was a mortal Sin!
And all were damn'd who rode therein!
Odd Things to ſay at ſuch a Seaſon!
But he maintain'd the whole by Reaſon.
His Arguments were ſhort and firm ones:
Such as adorn your printed Sermons;
Where, ſet in Silver, Doctrines golden
Have made your Mother much beholden.
Your Brethren active to ſurmount,
(I learn it from your own Account)
Four ſhort Harangues of your inditing,
Diſpatch more Points than all their Writing.
And then ſo feelingly you gave them,
That hundreds would be glad to have them.
So brief your Method is of proving!
Yet ſuch your happy Art of moving!
To leave one's Patron, Sir, you ſee
How hard it is, at leaſt for me!
I mean one modern Simile:
Yet, unawares, behold it trail,
In *Homer*'s Manner, with a Tail!
Which gives Occaſion for one more,
To bring me where I was before.

As when you prov'd, by Logic's Rules,
That all your former Friends were Fools,
You prov'd yourſelf, till then, of Courſe,
If not a Fool, yet ſomething worſe:
So fervent Zeal, (that often makes
In wiſer Heads than your's Miſtakes)
Here bore our Prieſt beyond his Point,
(You ſee, our Parallel runs quaint)
And turn'd on his own Breech the Birch:
For in the Center of the Church
Sate the good 'Squire and Dame together,
Whoſe Coach convey'd his Prieſtſhip thither.
If others could not chuſe but wonder,
Conceive th' Amazement they were under!
The 'Squire did nought but cough and nod's Head;
Yet wrought no Good upon our Cod's Head.
For he, tranſported with his Theme,
Puſh'd home the Point with Warmth extreme:
An hundred Times he had it o'er;
Friends! uſe thoſe wicked Things no more!
But walk to Heav'n in Love together,
Rather than ride the Lord knows whither!
The Sermon done, our rev'rend Prieſt
With Grace and Love the Flock diſmiſt.
The Coaches rumble to the Door:
Their Owners enter,—as before.
Among the reſt, our friendly Couple
(Who to the Craft were not o'er ſupple)

Aſcended theirs, with mutual Laughter;
Agreed—no Parſon ſhould come after.
'Tis neither Virtue, nor Ill-Nature,
That points our uſual Pulpit Satire.
That miſſive Weapon of the Craftſmen,
At Random flies from vulgar Shaftſmen;
Who take no Part, as human Agents,
In what they teach, as ghoſtly Regents,
When mounted on their weekly Pageants.
Of this Plebeian Herd our Prieſt
In Lump or Labour not the leaſt,
Soon as he found the Paſſage free,
Out ſail'd his Corpulence and he;
And made a Puſh, as Inſtinct taught him,
To board the Vehicle that brought him:
When, looking ſtedfaſt in his Face;
Sir, what's your Pleaſure here?—My Place.——
What! in a Coach? Oh dreadful Evil!
'Twould hurl you headlong to the Devil!
No, Doctor, trudge to Heav'n on Foot.——
—Coachman, drive on,—he ſhall not do't.
Prophets and Prieſts, the ſame in Line,
Both hold, they ſay, by Right divine;
But how, no Layman e'er could ſee,
From *Pethor*'s *Balaam* down to thee.
Say thou, who truly know'ſt their Trade,
By God or *Mammon* are they made?

In

In *Moſes'* Seat, we grant, they ſit;
(I take my Text from Sacred Writ)
But what they preach they practiſe not:
For Prieſts on Pow'r were firſt begot,
To teach how Subjects ought to act:
The Word is theirs, but ours the Fact.
And take the Sum of all they ſay,
Our Work is, "Worſhip and Obey:"
Their own they blab not out of School,
But read it there, "Divide and Rule."
Perhaps your Bards of ſtronger Brain,
Might ſtart ſome Reaſon for their Reign;
Or deviate from the Paths of Blame,
To pick Exceptions out by Name.
(Exceptions, doubtleſs, one may ſee,
Yet mean no Compliment to thee!)
Theſe ſift the Bleſſing from the Curſe:
But I with better blend the worſe;
And, group'd together as they fall,
Extract one Moral from them all.
Their Lives and Leſſons, fairly drawn,
(I ſpeak of thoſe below the Lawn)
Make out what my *Thalia* ſings;
"Saying and Doing are Two Things."
Suppoſe you make that Line your own?
An artleſs Youth have you not known,
Who found you forward to promote his
Affairs, yet never ſought your Notice?

Was learn'd, unlearn'd, poſſeſs'd, inſpir'd,
Contemn'd, applauded, ſhunn'd, deſir'd,
Advis'd, approv'd, inſtructed, preach'd at,
Before he gueſs'd the Point you reach'd at?
That Point, how turn'd it up at laſt?
Your Calling taught you to forecaſt:
That Youth, no Pimp, no Prieſt by Nature,
Was grown a doughty, dang'rous Creature:
Cauſeleſs, your Head conceiv'd a Fright
For the dear Coach, you ſeem'd to ſlight.
For this, your Batteries you play'd,
Nor did, nor meant, one Thing you ſaid!
Which proves what my *Thalia* ſings:
"Saying and doing are Two Things.".

TALE XXIV.

The FOX *and the* DRAGON.

A FOX would unmoleſted ſleep,
And plann'd a Cave ſecure and deep:
Reſolv'd to leave a World ſo vain,
He dug, and din'd, and dug again:
Reſolv'd to ſhun the Sight of Men,
He reach'd at laſt a Dragon's Den.
This Dragon (ſprung from that of old,
Which kept th' *Heſperian* Siſters Gold)

O'er

O'er Heaps of Treaſure brooding ſate,
And dar'd the Thieves to tempt their Fate.
Your Pardon, Sir, for this Intruſion,
(Said *Renard*, in a great Confuſion:)
My Thoughts on Wealth were never bent:
I ſeek no Riches—but Content.
Will then your Honour condeſcend
To tell a moſt obſequious Friend,
What Profit to this Care accrues?
Theſe endleſs Watchings what enſues?
For ever bury'd under Ground,
Your gloomy Toils, how are they crown'd?
Nor Profit, nor Reward have I,
(The Dragon cries;) but *Jove* moſt high
This Charge committed to my Care.—
How? always guard, yet never ſhare?
Give nothing to the Needy?—No:
I neither uſe, nor can beſtow.—
Alas! Unhappy as Thou art,
Receive (quoth *Renard*) in good Part
This Truth: The Gods muſt angry be,
When they create a Wretch like thee.
O *Gripus*, ſoon to be no more,
Like all thy Race that liv'd before!
Why toil thy Hands, why cares thy Mind,
To gather Wealth, and leave behind?
To thee this Fable we refer,
Whoſe Death ſhall glad thy future Heir,

With

With what the Gods requir'd; with what
Thy Hunger crav'd, but taſted not.
Thy haggard Soul, that droops and tires
While the Lyre ſooths, and Flute inſpires;
That groans To-day, with real Sorrow,
For what thy Food will coſt To-morrow;
Perjur'd to Heav'n, to Int'reſt ſold;
Whoſe God, whoſe every Thing is Gold;
Which, niggard ev'n at parting hence,
Shall bound thy Funeral Expence;
That Soul (poor Man! Thou know'ſt it not)
Poſſeſſeth nought thy Bags have got!

TALE XXV.

The BUTTON-HOLE.

AS thro' the Street a Quaker chanc'd to paſs,
He ſtopp'd a Trull, to treat her with a Glaſs.
The grateful Wench preſented, in return,
A warmer Gift than he could then diſcern:
'Twas not her Maidenhead, the Brethren ſay;
But then, 'twas ſomething likelier far to ſtay.
This cloſe Companion troubled ſore the Friend,
And made him go for Counſel, in the End.
Your Caſe is deſperate, and beyond my Art,
(The Surgeon ſaid) except you loſe the Part.

How

How! loſe a Member? cry'd the Friend with Grief.
You muſt; or hope from Phyſic no Relief:
There's no compounding; inſtantly comply,
Or— ſeriouſly prepare yourſelf to die.
All I poſſeſs to ſave it I would give;
But ſince my Life's at Stake, I chuſe to live:
So uſe me gently, and perform thy Work,
He ſaid: The Surgeon did it with a Jerk.
Prim view'd with Tears his amputated *Scut*,
And noted well the Draw'r wherein 'twas put.
The Friend went ev'ry Morning to be dreſt,
And drew this Draw'r one Day above the reſt;
When, lo! no leſs than ſix, beſides his own.—
He grinn'd, to think his Man was not alone;
And drily aſk'd, For what they all were kept?
The Surgeon anſwer'd, like a true Adept,
A Dozen of them, ſhank'd, and finely wrought,
Will make a Sett of Buttons for my Coat.
The Thought is good, and worthy of thy Trade,
(Reply'd the Friend:) But e'er thy Coat be made,
Wilt thou not get as many female *Moles*,
That ſo thy Buttons may have proper Holes?

TALE XXVI.

LOVE *atones for* LITTLE CRIMES.

'TIS true, I ſaid in amorous Rhymes,
That "Love atones for little Crimes."
This Truth in Queſtion dare you call?
Then, Heav'n have Mercy on us all!
He that condemns our actual Fault,
Extends the Sentence ev'n to Thought.
But once to dream of lawleſs Joys,
Our Chriſtian Chaſtity deſtroys:
For he breaks all, who breaks a Part.—
Now, point me out the guiltleſs Heart.
Your Caſuiſts here dive mighty deep:
They grant, "The Letter none can keep:
"*Ergo*, by ſinful Thought is meant,
"Such Thought as grows to fix'd Intent."
But till they make this Matter plain,
The ſimple Reading we'll retain.
Who leaves the Letter, leaves his Guide:
For Comments ſet the Text aſide.
Then why in Gen'rals ſhould we ſtay?
Does not the Word expreſsly ſay,
"That in the Heart Adult'ries riſe,
"From looking with laſcivious Eyes?"

Who

Who looks, and lusts, incurs the Curse.—
And Human-kind is so perverse,
That by the Eyes if Guilt comes in,
The Wretch that sees, is sure to sin.

Great was poor *Orinen*'s Mistake,
(That Eunuch for the Gospel's Sake);
He cut off all the active Part;
But left the Windows of his Heart.
The Counsel was, had he been wise,
To lose no Members but his Eyes:
For in the Middle tho' they center'd,
'Twas there his Fornications enter'd:
There lay the Cause of his Complaint:
And 'twould have vex'd the greatest Saint,
That Guilt on Guilt he liv'd to heap,
For looking where he could not leap.

You see, my Friend, how Matters stand:
I take no Force from the Command.
You never acted aught of Shame.—
But you have thought,—and that's the same.
The Case is plain; the Words express:
Then where's the Source of your Redress?
'Tis in the Passion that prevails:
'Tis in the wicked Limb that fails.
Passions, in Woman, or in Man,
Will take their Turn, strive all we can.
A Priest may strictly keep his Embers,
Yet never curb his Carnal Members.

These tend by Nature to their Gole,
As the touch'd Needle to the Pole:
And shall we damn a human Creature,
For being——what he is by Nature?

The Scripture's Sense and mine agree;
"From little Crimes no Mortal's free."
Yet ev'ry Mortal is not curst,
Because all Sin was damn'd at first.
Heav'n weighs the Motives and the Case,
And meets our Weakness with his Grace.
Hence Love, the Weakness of us all,
Atones, ev'n while it makes us fall.
Such Slips are owing to our Make;
And Grace comes in for Nature's Sake.

'Tis thus, or none could Mercy hope,
From humble Curate up to Pope.
(And if the Clergy may despair,
What Wretches we poor Laymen are!)
That chosen Vessel, righteous *Paul*,
Whose Case were happy for us all,
Complains aloud of Wars within,
And Members prompting him to Sin.
Paul spoke his Sentence with Concern,
"To wed, is better than to burn."
Good Man! his Work was almost done:
'Twas worse than *Timothy* his Son.

Joseph, I grant you, once was cool.——
That's an Exception, not a Rule.

Be-

Before this Youth, who ſcorn'd his Dame,
The Prieſt of *On*'s fair Daughter came;
And were her blooming Charms withſtood?
No; that was more than *Joſeph* could;——
For he was *Jacob*'s ableſt Son:
He got Two Tribes—inſtead of One.
Suppoſe we more Examples bring,
And turn to *Iſrael*'s wiſeſt King?
That ſolemn Preacher taſted firſt
The Bliſs, which afterwards he curſt:
Nay, ev'n in Age renew'd his Flame,
And dy'd, for aught we know, the Same.
He warns from Women of the Street;
But makes them ſay, "Stol'n Joys are ſweet."
King *David* liv'd a Man of God:
Yet half his Deeds were vaſtly odd.
He mourn'd *Uriah*'s raviſh'd Wife;
But with a Miſtreſs ended Life.
The Monarch's Pulſe indeed was low,
Nor could his Blood be taught to flow:
But 'tis no Virtue of the Man,
Where Nature does the moſt ſhe can.
Why ſhould we run the Bible thro'?
'Midſt many Inſtances, theſe few
Inform us, Nature will take Place,
In ſpite of Wiſdom, or of Grace.
And ſhall we no Expedient find
To ſalve the Fault of all our Kind?

A Weakneſs that belongs to each,
(Obſerve the Sum of what I preach!)
In venial Colours muſt be painted,
Or, all the Saints will be unſainted.
Take the dark Side of what I ſay,
And not one Chriſtian gets away.
The preſent Thought condemns the paſt,
And by himſelf ſhall each be caſt:
For ſure his Conſcience muſt be wrong'd,
Who ſays, he never look'd nor long'd.
Now—where the Guilty are to go,
Our *Sunday* Guides may let us know.
Tremble each Woman, and each Man!
Ye Prieſts! abſolve them, if you can.
But ſay that Nature, as ſhe ought,
Pleads for our neceſſary Fault:
(And ſure, in vain we faſt and pray;
For when ſhe prompts, we muſt obey:)
Then all the Matter's at an End,
The Cauſe and Cure ſo juſtly blend.
See, join'd the Pardon and the Crime,
And Truth, for once, convey'd in Rhyme!
Here *Paul*, who ſtood our Friend before,
Appears againſt us, twice, or more.
He recommends the ſingle State.—
He does;—but at ſo faint a Rate,
That any marry'd Man alive,
(For *Paul* had not the Heart to wive,)

Who can the Odds from Trial tell,
Might argue twenty Times as well:
Yet when did Reaſon once prevail
Againſt th'Attraction of the Tail?

The ſame Apoſtle wiſely thought,
Two Wives well us'd, a Church well taught,
Would burthen much a Biſhop's Life;
And therefore counſel'd—but one Wife.
From this what Sequel can enſue?
Only, that ſome had taken Two:
At leaſt, that ſome were that way leaning:
For elſe the Caution had no Meaning.

This Counſel they may take who lift,
And read it, like a *Romiſh* Prieſt.
(The ſtricteſt Way it can be read;)
That Prieſts ſhould neither wench nor wed:
Our Ghoſtly Fathers, if they pleaſe,
(The Precept reaches only theſe,)
May follow cloſe St. *Paul*'s Advice:
But Laymen ſcarce will be ſo nice.

TALE XXVI.

WOMENS LOGICK.

'TIS ſtrange that Sex ſhould moſt obey,
Who talk of univerſal Sway;
That ſtill the Tail the Head ſhould rule,
And ev'ry Man be Woman's Fool;
That they, whoſe Province 'tis to hear
What wiſer we may make appear,
Should make us all they ſay believe;
Their Word the only Proof they give.
The weaker Veſſels let them be;
And think them ſo who will for me:
'Tis plain their Logick overpow'rs
The boaſted Energy of ours.
I firmly think, and ſhall do ſtill,
That Reaſon's Strength lies in his Will,
'Till Syllogiſm can overthrow
The Force of, "'Tis, becauſe 'tis ſo."
My Name was fix'd, I always thought:
Banks, *quaſi* River's Banks, I wrote;
Which Etymology, ſo plain,
Againſt the World I durſt maintain.
Full oft' I ſaid, full oft' I ſung,
How from ſome Fiſherman I ſprung;

Who

Who dwelling near his ſubject Brook,
Thence his Denomination took.
But vain is all we think or do,
Unleſs the Fair approve it too!
My Name, of which I was ſo ſure,
Ah me! no longer muſt endure.
A Female Couſin ſaw we write,
And ſeem'd to ſtartle at the Sight.—
My Couſin, ſure 'tis not the ſame!
This ne'er can be my Couſin's Name!
My Father wrote it with a *C*,
And ſo do I, and ſo ſhall he.—
O *C*? ſaid I,—that muſt be wrong.—
'Tis right, quoth ſhe;—ſo hold your Tongue.—
I told her, I could ſcarce believe her;
It muſt be *Banks* from *Banks of River*,—
A Fig for *River*'s *Banks*! ſhe cry'd;
I ſay, I'll have the *C* ſupply'd,
Or elſe I'll never own you more.—
So loſe my Favour,—or reſtore.—
Not own? thought I, I ne'er ſhall bear it!
Then ſtraight at Bottom clapp'd a *Carat*;
Reſolv'd I'll uſe it 'till I die;
Convinc'd, ſhe gave good Reaſon why.
With Women ſince if I diſpute,
They unavoidably confute:
My Couſin need but ſpeak her Mind,
To make me ſilent, deaf, or blind:

What

What Mortal would not be the same,
Perſuaded once out of his Name?

TALE XXVIII.

The SUBSTITUTE FATHER.

AVARO liv'd a private Life,
And ſtarv'd in Bondage with his Wife.
Did ſhe too ſtarve? To him at leaſt
So Matters ſeem'd; but ſhe knew beſt:
For ſhe was plump, Hiſtorians ſay,
And look'd as blithſome as the Day:
But that, *ifvare* underſtood,
Was from her Nature, not her Food.

One Son they had; but never more.
Children, thought he, make People poor;
And Virtue dwells in Self-denial:
So I'll abſtain from farther Trial.—
Whether the Lady thouhgt the ſame,
Or not, is nothing to my Theme.

The Marriage Articles, which ſaid
Madam ſhould always have her Maid,
Were kept from *Suſan* down to *Nan*;
Till *Dick* begun to grow a Man.
Dick was the Son we juſt now mention'd;
Who, grown a Man, inform'd the Wench on't:

The

The Wench grew kind, as *Dick* grew bolder,
And was convinc'd of what he told her.
A lucky Girl may grant a Favour;
Yet keep her Character for ever;
But Luck was little of *Nan*'s Side:
Her Failing grew too big to hide.
She wept, she fobb'd, she ran quite wild:——
What shall we do about the Child?
Poor Youth! thy Ruin it will be:
And I——what must become of me!
Caught in this said Dilemma, *Dick*
(Whose Faculties were sharp and quick)
Concluded thus to save their Bacon:
In Father's Net it must be taken:
Nan, you can swear a Lye for once;
You know, the 'Squire is but a Dunce:
At worst, his Worship may be wrought on:
Leave that to me.—Quoth *Nan* well thought on.
Dick wispers it about the Parish:
God knows the Cause! but *Nan* looks quarish;
I wish my Father don't grow young,——
This was enough; the Story rung.
A Country Servant big with Bearn,
Is thought a popular Concern:
So *Nan* was quickly apprehended:
Son, Father, Mother, all attended.
Before the Justice now we find her,
(*Dick* prompting all the while behind her,

His Worſhip influenc'd before:)
Well Huſſy, who made you a Whore?—
My Maſter, cry'd the Quean; and took
The uſual Oath upon the Book.

What ſwore the Slut? *Avaro* cries,
(And lifted up his Hands and Eyes!)
My Wife can prove my long Unfitneſs.—
Villain, quoth ſhe, call me to witneſs?
Yes, Letcher, I can witneſs this:
I've now and then a ſlabbering Kiſs:
That's all, theſe twenty Years and more:
The Reſt, it ſeems, was for a Whore!

Condemn'd on Evidence ſo plain,
Avaro urg'd his Age in vain:
A Child not his, a jealous Wife,
Were now the Comforts of his Life.

The Father ſuffer'd for the Son?
In this, quoth *Dick*, no Harm was done.
But Senſe of Wrong (with Leave of *Dick*)
Would touch the Calmeſt to the Quick.
Conſcious, yet could no Proof produce;—
There lies the Strength of an Abuſe!
True, there's no Injury unknown;
The Child who thinks ſo, is your own:
But 'tis the Devil and all to buy,
Yet have no Finger in the Pye!

Obſerve the Diff'rence among Brothers!
(I mean *Avaro* and—ſome others)

These have the Shame, without the Vice;
Those pay for all,—but get a Slice.
The former Case, tho' hard indeed,
With crafty *Richards* may succeed:
But sure the latter often falls,
Within a Mile or two of *Paul's*;
Where Courtiers keep good-natur'd Proxies,
Who live contented with their Doxies.

TALE XXIX.

A FRAGMENT.

IN *Cloe's* Chamber, she and I
Together sate, no Creature nigh:
The Time and Place conspir'd to move
A Longing for the Joys of Love.
I sigh'd, and kiss'd, and press'd her Hand;
Did all—to make her understand.
She, pretty, tender-hearted Creature,
Obey'd the Dictates of Good-Nature,
As far as Modesty would let her.
A melting Virgin seldom speaks,
But with her Breasts, and Eyes, and Cheeks:
Nor was it hard from these to find
That *Cloe* had—almost a Mind.

Thus

Thus far 'twas well; but to proceed,
What ſhould I do?—Grow bold.—I did.—
At laſt ſhe falter'd, what would'ſt have?—
Your Love, ſaid I, or elſe my Grave.—
Suppoſe it were the firſt, quoth ſhe,
Could you for-ever conſtant be?
For-ever? *Clos*, by thoſe Eyes,
Thoſe Bubbies, which ſo fall and riſe,
By all that's ſoft, and all that's fair,
By your whole ſacred ſelf, I ſwear,
Your fondeſt Wiſhes ne'er ſhall crave
So conſtant, ſo compleat a Slave!
Damon, you know too well the Art,
She ſighing ſaid, to reach my Heart!
Yet oh! I can't, I won't comply.——
Why will you preſs? Dear *Damon* why?
* * * * * * * * * * * * *
Deſunt Cætera.

For *Clos* coming in one Day,
As on my Deſk the Copy lay;
What means this rhyming Fool? ſhe cries:
Why ſome Folks may believe theſe Lies!
So on the Fire ſhe threw the Sheet.
I burn'd my Hand—to ſave this Bit.

TALE XXIII.

The EXORCISM.

IN Days of Yore, when *Roman* Rules
Prevail'd, and made poor Laymen Fools;
When wicked Priests could sell Salvation,
And safely cuckold half the Nation:
There liv'd (as antient Annals teach)
A Wight, old, covetous, and rich.
There liv'd? where liv'd? you ask.—At *Tame*.—
Which rhymes to—*Rinald* was his Name.

A Wife he had, with ev'ry Charm
That manly, vigorous Youth might warm:
But to his lapleſs Trunk confin'd,
By Parents Choice, againſt her Mind,
She not the leaſt Delight could move,
Nor taſte herſelf the Sweets of Love.
Three thouſand Pounds, at Ten *per Cent*,
Supply'd him with a handſome Rent:
Yet ſuch a Niggard was this Wight,
He'd ſeldom ſpend his Pint at Night;
Nor knew he any Joy in Life
Much oft'ner than he knew his Wife.
For *Susan*'s Part (ſo hight the Fair)
The Mode was her peculiar Care:
Now Dreſs, now Furniture was wanted:
Nor Dreſs, nor Furniture was granted.
Houſe-keeping, Truth! was Charge enough;
He could not buy much Houſhold-ſtuff.
And whom had ſhe to pleaſe but him,
That ſhe, forſooth! muſt go ſo trim?
How could the Woman take it well?
Sure, 'twas her Duty to rebel!
Whate'er ſhe could, ſhe bought on Truſt;
(Let *Rinald* grumble! pay he muſt:)
So, when for Int'reſt he was gone,
The Neighbours came; the Treat went on,
The rev'rend Rector of the Pariſh
(Some Faults ev'n Clergymen may cheriſh)

Was, if you took him together,
As good as e'er trod Shoe of Leather.
To him the Dame repair'd 'ere *Easter* ——
What then? Why then the Priest confess'd her:
Then private Penance was enjoin'd;
And acted o'er—to Madam's Mind.
Religion was a Thing that *Susan*
Had ne'er before took Time to muse on;
But learning now, from Rules of Art,
That Penance was its harshest Part;
And finding that so great a Pleasure,
She grew religious out of Measure.
And having gain'd sufficient Strength,
To carry Spite a Woman's Length;
She counted all her Husband's Crimes,
Of various Sorts, at divers Times;
And made a solemn Resolution,
To put Revenge in Execution.
Mere Cuckoldom should not suffice her: ——
He must be by, yet ne'er the wiser.
When People bear a willing Mind,
Occasion seldom lags behind.
The Terrors taught us by our Nurse,
As Reason fails, renew their Force:
Hence *Rinald* oft' conceiv'd a Fright,
From whist'ling Winds, at Dead of Night.

Sue takes the Hint; improves his Feats;
Nor Mouſe, nor Spider, now ſhe hears,
But, whip! ſhe covers—Neck and Ears.
If Door or Window chance to clap,
Or, on th' Offender's Neck, the Trap;
'Twas ſome departed Soul returning!
All clad in white! with Taper burning!
Lord! how ſhe ſcream'd, and wiſh'd for Morning!

It ſoon produc'd what *Suſan* wanted,—
Without Diſpute the Houſe was haunted!
Roger the Prieſt muſt come, and lay
This helliſh Fiend in Burning Sea.
The Night was fix'd; they all prepare,
Some ſay, old *Satan* was in Fear;
For Prieſts with Bell, and Book, and Candle,
Could then the Dæmon ſtrangely handle.

'Tis very hard, in Proſe or Rhyme,
Well to deſcribe the Flux of Time;
For this the Reader muſt allow,
And think th' appointed Ev'ning now,
Th' appointed Ev'ning brings the Rector;
Suſan intreats him to protect her;
Rinaldo too, in pitcous Fright,
Deſires he'll make the Circle right.

Hodge undertook to do his beſt:
Then this Harangue to both addreſs'd.

My Friends, in order to proceed,
And make this Goblin go indeed,

'Tis

'Tis fit we all keep *ad Amuſſim*:
You muſt lie down, and I muſt curſe him.
Bind up your Eyes! nor ſtir! nor ſpeak!
(One Fault, obſerve! the Charm will break)
So Heav'n receive ye into Protection!
As you ſhall follow this Direction!
Rinaldo trembles and agrees;
Then mutter'd ſomething on his Knees:
But *Sukey* ſcream'd (a ſubtle Queen!) —;
As tho' ſhe had the Spirit ſeen:
Ev'n *Roger* ſcarcely could forbear
To drop a ſympathizing Tear.

The choſen Room, one Story high,
Was where our Couple us'd to lie.
A houſhold Ghoſt, of Tabby Hue,
Was here confin'd, by Care of *Sue*;
Muzzled, her Murmuring to check,
With *Toby*'s Chain about her Neck.
They all aſcend the magic Place;
The Help-mates bind each other's Face;
Then ſtretch themſelves upon the Floor,
While *Roger* faſtens up the Door.

The Circle made, the Prieſt begins;
And, firſt abſolves 'em from their Sins:
Then ſtoutly muſters all his Forces,
Of *Latin*, *Greek*, hard Names, and Curſes—
Abi, foul Fiend! *in Rubrum Mare!*
A hollow Voice reply'd, who are ye?

Then, at a thund'ring Word of *Greek*,
The Closet Door was heard to squeak!
Enter *Grimalkin* with her Chain,
And rattle round the Room amain!
Her late Confinement makes her eager;
Her present Load persists to plague her!

Trembling and sweating as he lay,
Rinaldo wish'd (he dar'st not pray)
To die;—but in a nat'ral Way!
What happen'd more, *Sanctus'd* to tell,
She could not see, but she could smell.

Here might my Epic Muse rehearse,
In figur'd Stile, and flowing Verse,
How, while the real Spirit mov'd,
The Priest and *Sir* their Time improv'd!
(The Beaux would laugh; the Ladies leer;
Nor could the Criticks be severe!)
But, as the Scene at present lies,
Nature may dictate to the Wise,
What Love and Spite would prompt them to;
What Others, in their Case, would do.

The Patient apt, the Doctor strong,
Whate'er they did, they were not long.——
Unmouth'd, unchain'd, Puss play'd her Pranks.
Now rise, quoth *Roger*, and give Thanks!
They did; and *Rinald*, rais'd to Life,
Bless'd the good Man, and kiss'd his Wife.

My Tale, to Popery thus leaning,
Is truly Catholic—in Meaning.
When worn-out Sixty, with Sixteen,
Ventures the Wedding-Sheets between;
Confeſſing tho' the Fair explode,
Intriguing, then, is all their Mode;
They hold it lawful, by the Code.
At leaſt, they're minded of a Man;
And, if one can't,—another can.
A Coach, the Fields, a Friendly Hoſt,
A Man's own Houſe, without a Ghoſt,
(When he, poor Man! becomes like no Man)
May ſerve the Purpoſe of a Woman,
Be ſhe *Turk*, *Proteſtant*, or *Roman!*
For, *Papiſt*, *Proteſtant*, or *Turk*,
When the right Workman cannot Work,
To him her Charms are legal Booty,
(Layman or Prieſt) who does the Duty:
And who can blame that Friend of Beauty?
The Huſband's ſelf ſhould thank the Neighbour,
Who, Chriſtian-like, beſtows his Labour.
And moſt ill-natur'd were that Elf,
Who ſnubb'd the Wife, that found herſelf,
Without th' Expence of Peace, or Pelf;
When he, uncapable to find her,
Had broke the matrimonial Binder.

Be-

Beſides, 'twere wicked with a Witneſs,
To grudge a Boſom-Friend that Sweetneſs,
For which you have no nat'ral Fitneſs!

TALE XXXI.

To CLOE.

CLOE, this comes to let you know!
With me, your Slave, how *Matters go.*
And ſure your Mercy it muſt bribe,
Could Words my woful Caſe deſcribe!
For Buſ'neſs I am no more fit
Than powder'd Fop, or penſion'd Wit:
I feed not as I us'd to do;
And if I ſleep, I dream of you.
In ſhort, I find myſelf ſo bad,
You muſt be kind, or I run mad;
Or (what's ſtill worſe) my Heart will break,
Dear cruel *Cloe!* for thy Sake.
If this won't move a Heart of Flint,
If this be'nt Love, the Devil's in't;
When you, or *Bedlam*, or the Grave,
Muſt ſoon receive your wretched Slave!
Perhaps you'll ſay, you wiſh to know
What ſort of Mercy you muſt ſhow.—

Why

Why Child, no Queſtion, you can gueſs
Much more, than I care t'expreſs;
However, ſince you'd have me free,
Mind what I ſay, and gen'rous be.

You're not ſo young, but you have felt
Your Boſom heave, and Spirits melt;
Thought what your Parents did before;
Been ſure of much, and gueſs'd at more.
You know, when Hands and Hearts combine,
'Tis but that—ſomething elſe may join;
That this is what we Suitors want,
With all our whining, formal Cant:
And, whatſoever ſome pretend,
When Women yield, 'tis for this End.

And muſt I tell you, after this,
That I purſue this mutual Bliſs?
The Bliſs which you have long'd to try,
I dare to ſay,——as much as I?
If not for mine, for your own Sake,
Bleſs me with—what you muſt partake!

But, leſt you ſhould miſconſtrue here,
I'll juſt explain myſelf, my Dear!
I would not lead your Mind aſtray;
I mean, in Matrimonial Way:
Let Band and Caſſoc join us firſt:
I'll love you duly,——come the firſt.

Cloe, you ſee I muſt be plain:
If then you pity all my Pain,

And

And can, and will, redreſs my Woe,
Say Yes, at once;—if not, ſay No.
If you are willing, I'm your Man:
If not,———do better where you can.——
But ſtill I feel thee at my Heart!
This one Propoſal—'ere we part.—
(At leaſt, may this be not in vain!)
If Rival youths you entertain,
And if, without Remorſe of Mind,
To more than one you can be kind;
If Change of Diſhes pleaſe you beſt;
Let me be ſerv'd among the reſt:
But if to neither you'll agree,
This Billet burn, and pardon me.

TALE XXXII.

The WIDOW'S EXCUSE.

WHEN Inclination ſtrongly teizes,
Which End ſoever firſt it ſeizes,
O'er the whole Mortal 'twill prevail;
Tho' ne'er ſo ſure as in the Tail:
Here it maintains a conſtant Party;
The outward Members all are hearty;
Queen Underſtanding quits her Seat;
Reaſon and Judgment ſound Retreat;

While

While Fancy takes *Frank Osborne*'s Part,
To daub the Action o'er with Art.
A Widow Prude had often ſworn,
No Breeches ſhould approach her more;
Had often prov'd, that ſecond Marriage
Was worſe than Maidens firſt Miſcarriage;
And always told them of their Sin,
When Widows would be Wives agen.
Women, who thus their Beds abuſe,
Should die (ſhe thought) like Harlot *Jews*:
Let her alone to throw the Stones:
If 'twere but Law, ſhe'd make no Bones.—
Long had ſhe led a Life demure,
With Fame and Fortune both ſecure,
When calling up her Servant *Ned*,
She frown'd upon him firſt, then ſaid:
Shame of my Houſe! I underſtand,
From a good creditable Hand,
That you and *Iſabel* my Maid
Drive an abominable Trade!
But t'other Day you both were ſeen
A doing—you know what I mean!
The Story, Knave, begins to ring
In ev'ry Ear!—A pretty Thing!
On me the Scandal's like to fix,
And (God knows) I abhor ſuch Tricks!
'Twere better, Sirrah, you were dead,
Than ſuch a Falſhood ſhould be ſpread!

Ned

Ned ſtar'd with all the Eyes he had,
And thought his Miſtreſs had been mad.
'Twas known, that *Iſabel* and he
(So far from great) could ne'er agree:
And whence, and how this Charge ſhould riſe,
He could not, for his Soul, deviſe.
Yet, recollecting all his Strength,
He bow'd, and thus reply'd—at length:

Madam, whoe'er this Tale might foſters;
As ſure as God reſides in *Glou'ſter*,
'Tis all maliciouſly deſign'd
Againſt poor *Ned* to turn your Mind:
For ſo may Heav'n my Wants ſupply,
As ev'ry Tittle proves a Lye!
Yet, with Submiſſion, if 'twere true,
'Tis ſomething odd, methinks that you,
Whoſe Life's a Pattern to the Times,
Should fear a Scandal from my Crimes.

Scarce had he ſpoke, when all in Tears,
With blubber'd Cheeks, the Dame appears:
She ſighs, ſhe ſobs, ſhe wipes her Eyes,
And in pathetic Accents cries:

Alas! dear *Ned*, what Times are theſe!
I long for Death, if Heav'n would pleaſe!
This wicked World, may I abhor it!
The Lord grant me a better for it!
My Huſband—Ah that deareſt Creature!
Oft' I reflect on his Good-Nature!

He took ſuch Care of my good Name!
And put all ſland'rous Tongues to Shame!
But ah! he's dead!—here Grief amain
Came bubbling up, and ſtopp'd the Strain.
Ned was no Fool,—he ſaw his Cue,
And how to uſe good Fortune knew:
He ſeiz'd Occaſion by the Fore-lock;
(A Servant could not wiſh for more Luck!)
Urg'd—of what Uſe a Huſband was,
To vindicate a Woman's Cauſe;
Exclaim'd againſt the ſland'rous Age,
And ſwore, with Vehemence and Rage,
That Madam was ſo free from Fault,
She ne'er ſo much as ſinn'd in Thought:
To make which bold Aſſertion good,
He'd loſe his laſt dear Drop of Blood!
This Logic, which well pleas'd the Dame,
At the ſame Time eludes her Shame:
A Huſband for a Huſband's Sake,
Was what ſhe'd ne'er conſent to take;
Yet—as the Age was ſo cenſorious,
And *Ned*'s Propoſals were ſo glorious,
She thought 'twas beſt to take upon her
A ſecond Guardian of her Honour.
Woman, exalt her all you can,
Is but the Supplement of Man:
He ſhould protect, and ſhe depend:
God made her weaker for that End.

And tho' he mix'd her Maſs beſide
With ſo much Modeſty and Pride,
That, while ſhe pants for cloſe Communion,
The Man's Endeavours make the Union;
'Tis yet no Satire, but a Picture,
Of native Weakneſs to convict her;
And ſay that Woman, Maids or Matrons,
Who lack no Huſbands, long for Patrons.

TALE XXXIII.

FALLING *in* LOVE.

WHO can deſcribe, in Numbers fit,
All the new Pangs by Lovers found,
When, undeſigning, firſt they meet;
Give, and receive the deſtin'd Wound?
Who can? Yet ſince this friendly Lay
Damon demands, O Muſe rehearſe
What govern'd Fancy bids thee ſay.—
May *Phœbus* aid the flowing Verſe!
Love wears a thouſand diff'rent Forms;
He wins the Heart a thouſand Ways:
Now like a Deity he ſtorms;
Now in Diſguiſe the Soul betrays.

As varied is the Anguiſh felt,
When Two begin to grow the ſame:
With ſtifled Heat ſome inly melt;
While ſome confeſs, and urge their Flame.
Yet would the God of Nature bend,
His boundleſs Sway could Laws reſtrain;
Thus might I paint him to my Friend,
Thus ſtate the Meaſures of his Reign.
Two choſen Names, on Fate's long Roll,
In the ſame Character he reads;
Remarks the Frame of either Soul;
And, unobſerv'd, in both proceeds.
Occaſion, conſcious of the Fact,
The Place, the Time, the Cauſe contrives;
Brings them together, to tranſact
Some common Buſ'neſs of their Lives.
Expects my *Damon*—I ſhould tell
Of Love's Activity and Force?
The Light'ning I could paint as well,
That pierces all Things in its Courſe!
It enters;——in the Breaſt it ſtays;——
(Believe it done as ſoon as thought!
About the Heart it kindly plays;—
It takes:—By all the Soul 'tis caught.
The gen'rous Youth, the firſt on Fire,
Looks kinder Things than others ſpeak;
And Sighs, and broken Words conſpire,
In vain, his mighty Thoughts to break.

He views the Nymph,—while o'er her Cheeks
The Red and White alternate flow;
'Till, ſympathetic (what he ſeeks)
Her Soul like his begins to glow.
Diſorder'd now, the Boy perceives,
And, eager, fans the kindled Fire;
'Till her Heart pants, her Boſom heaves,
And the whole Maid is one Deſire!
Now both ſubmit, *Love* only ſways:
They talk, they toy, they burn, they gaze;
Send forth, and mix, inceſſant Rays;
'Till all their Souls unite, and blaze.
But oh! the Raptures that ſucceed,
And bleſs the Flame divinely pure!
Strong as the Sun, themſelves they feed,
And, like his Beams, they ſtill endure!

TALE XXXIV.

BALAAM's PEDIGREE.

IF Thou canſt laugh when Nature guides,
Keep in thy Breath, and hold thy Sides.
I ſing a Creature of thy Order,
Whoſe Deeds on Thine can no ways border.
Much have I griev'd, that in my Lays
(Till now) I never ſung thy Praiſe:

When

When all who know me, often hear,
I think thee perfect, without Peer.
My Compliments are ſhort and wholeſome,
And more than this to thee were fulſome;
Though Dedications ſhould be free,
Whether to *Balaam*, or to thee!
To preach in *Berkſhire Balaam* came.
The Hearers' Hearts were in a Flame.
Such Talents ought not to be hid!
That we ſhould miſs them—God forbid!
No, we'll engage him here for Life:
Let *William*'s Waggon fetch his Wife.—
His Goods? ne'er mind.—What he may want,
Friends, we can do no leſs than grant,
New Coat, new Band, new flaxen Wig,
Make him next *Sunday* look ſo big!
Still more the Siſters Hearts he moves.
Lord, how the Gentleman improves!
Ordain him, Neighbours, out of Hand;
Nor dare the Voice of Heaven withſtand!
'Tis done: The *London* Elders meet,
And dub their Brother Prieſt complete;
Who now omits no Means, to prove
Himſelf commiſſion'd from above:
Learns with an Air a Text to box;
Is deep, pathetick, orthodox:
Fathers and Sons in order teaches;
And ſays *In Speach*, as well as preaches:

Is follow'd, honour'd, and obey'd;
And, what's the Soul of all, well pay'd.
Riches gets Pride, and Pride gets Wars.——
So *Vincent*'s Almanack declares.)
'Tis too familiar---to enquire!
The Station of their Teacher's Sire;
Nor will Sir *Balaam* condeſcend
To tell, downright, the neareſt Friend:
Yet when Diſcourſe may glance that Way,
He keeps the Subject ſtill in play;
And hints obliquely, all he can,
That *ſomewhere* he was *ſome great Man.*
Thus Matters went: When *Sunday* came,
The Face of Things was ſtill the ſame.
The Paſtor deals his Food; the Sheep
Attend, half weeping, half aſleep:
Bleſt with Stupidity profound,
And taught to trudge in one dull Round.
But there's a Youth (what Pity 'tis
There ſhould be ſuch a Youth as this!)
Who buys old Books, ſits up a-Nights,
Reads, talks, diſputes, and Verſes writes.
Sad Caſe! this *John* (that was his Name)
Would ſpeak it, without Fear or Shame,
How *Balaam* pleas'd him ſuch a Day;
And when he came diſturb'd away:
Hence many pious Men preſage,
This Lad will edify the Age:

They

They ſee a Teacher in his Face,
Adorn'd with ev'ry Gift and Grace.
Soon as the Matter reach'd his Ears,
(So formidable *John* appears)
Our doughty Doctor apprehends
Such Words may influence the Friends:
Already thinks his Int'reſt ſinking,
(Thinks *John* was far enough from thinking)
Fears 'twill conclude in his Diſgrace,
And *John*'s Promotion on the Place.
The Parſon fears! Are Parſons idle,
When People ſeem to bite the Bridle?
Do they with Meekneſs uſe to bear
The diſtant Object of their Fear?
Far from it: *John* muſt be remov'd,
And all who favour him reprov'd.
A Show of Friendſhip and of Truth
Muſt firſt engage th' cautious Youth.
Mary, this Moment go and fetch him;
I've ſome important Things to teach him.
The Servant goes; the Youth obeys;
Balaam grows laviſh in his Praiſe.
For the great Work deſign'd by Heav'n;
Elſe why thoſe fine Endowments giv'n?
So young, 'twas wond'rous he could ſpeak
So much good *Latin*, ſo much *Greek!*
None fitter for the Churches' Uſe,——
Permit but him to introduce.

This Part ſecure, the other Side
With equal Art muſt now be ply'd:
Here all his Learning he employs
Againſt encouraging ſuch Boys.
What, under Twenty? 'tis too young!
Beſides, he wants the *Latin* Tongue!
And he's ſo ſtupid, (I diſcern it)
He'd not be capable to learn it.
From Fifteen Years to five and forty:
So, good my Friends, let me dehort ye!
Think ſuch a Fellow can improve ye?
He'll ſooner make a *Babel* on ye!
Th' Hiſtorian paſſed on but dully,
Who paints Particulars too fully.
The Parſon plots; the Youth perceives it;
Diſlikes his native Place, and leaves it;
Puts on clean Shirt, and *Sunday*'s Suit;
So trampts it up to Town on Foot:
Chagrin'd in Mind, and poor in Purſe;
What Circumſtances could be worſe?
Eſtabliſh'd in ſo warm a Neſt,
Think how elate the victor Prieſt!
Well educated, highly born,
He ſwells, and treats Mankind with Scorn:
Nor further Trouble fears to know
From an expell'd, degraded Foe.
Our Pilgrim Youth, oppreſs'd with Care,
No Means of Life, no Proſpect near;

Upon

Upon the Road, it has been ſaid,
To Goddeſs *Nemeſis* he pray'd.
But *John* a ſounder Chriſtian far,
Than thus to play th' Idolatar.
Things happen that are mighty odd,
Without th' Aſſiſtance of a God:
'Tis no great Miracle, old Shoes
In forty Miles their Heels ſhould loſe:
This was the Caſe: Thus *John* arriv'd
Perceiv'd his *Calceaments* depriv'd.
The Loſs his weary Feet diſtreſt;
Yet outward thro' the Crowd he preſt,
'Till near his deſtin'd Place of Reſt.
Where tatter'd Garments wave on high
He found a Stall, and, ſitting by,
Bade *Criſpin* the Defect ſupply.—
For Two-pence, Maſter, I proceed;
You'll have them inſtantly.—Agreed.
John views the Cobler o'er and o'er.—
Have I not ſeen this Face before?
Surely, the Features are the ſame:
Pray, Father, what may be your Name?
Balaam.—Renounce it then for Shame-ſake:
I know a canting Knave your Name-ſake,
A Fellow without Mark of Grace:
Pray Heav'n you be not of his Race:
For, tho' a Cobler, ſuch Relation
Would bring a Scandal on your Station.

Here

Here many a Queſtion *Criſpin* ply'd;
As, where this Parſon might reſide?
His Preaching how the People heeded?
Which *John* reſolv'd, and then proceeded:
Till, op'ning his Complaint at large,
He laid ſuch Things to *Balaam*'s Charge,
(Things moſt unworthy of a Scholar)
That thus the Cobler burſt with Choler:
Peter miſuſe you? don't you ſay ſo Man:—
I'm ſure *my Son* would injure no Man.
John thought this *Noſtrum*, well apply'd,
Might cure the Parſon of his Pride:
So advertis'd it—for his Profit;
And much the Neighbourhood made of it.
Patron, thy Caſuiſtry can tell
Whether or not the Youth did well:
I tell the Tale by his Directions,
And only make theſe two Reflections.
Balaam is not the only Aſs,
Who, rais'd by Fortune, Friends, or Braſs,
Too ſoon forgetting whence he ſprung,
Has liv'd to hear his Folly ſung.
Like *John*, the Injur'd often meet
Revenge;—and all Revenge is ſweet.

TALE

TALE XXXV.

The HAPPY NIGHT.

SINCE now my *Sylvia* is as kind as fair,
Let Wit and Joy ſucceed my dull Deſpair.
O what a Night of Pleaſure was the laſt:
A full Reward for all my Troubles paſt;
And on my Head if future Miſchiefs fall,
This Happy Night ſhall make amends for all.
Nay, tho' my *Sylvia*'s Love ſhould turn to Hate,
I'll think of this, and die contented with my Fate.
Twelve was the lucky Minute when we met,
And on her Bed were cloſe together ſet;
Tho' liſt'ning Spies might be perhaps too near,
Love fill'd our Hearts; there was no Room for Fear.
Now, whilſt I ſtrive her melting Heart to move;
With all the pow'rful Eloquence of Love;
In her fair Face I ſaw the Colour riſe,
And an unuſual Softneſs in her Eyes;
Gently they look, and I with Joy adore,
That only Charm they never had before.
The Wounds they made, her Tongue was us'd to heal,
But now theſe gentle Enemies reveal
A Secret, which that Friend would ſtill conceal.
My Eyes tranſported too with am'rous Rage,
Seem fierce with Expectation to engage;
But faſt ſhe holds my Hands, and cloſe her Thighs,
And what ſhe longs to do, with Frowns denies.

A ſtrange Effect on fooliſh Women wrought,
Bred in Diſguiſes, and by Cuſtom taught:
Cuſtom, that Prudence ſometimes over-rules,
But ſerves inſtead of Reaſon to the Fools!
Cuſtom, which all the World to Slav'ry brings,
The dull Excuſe for doing ſilly Things.
She, by this Method of her fooliſh Sex,
Is forc'd a-while me and herſelf to vex:
But now, when thus we had been ſtruggling long,
Her Limbs grow weak, and her Deſires grow ſtrong;
How can ſhe hold to let the Hero in?
He ſtorms without, and Love betrays within.
Her Hands at laſt, to hide her Bluſhes, leave
The Fort unguarded, willing to receive
My fierce Aſſault made with a Lover's Haſte,
Like Lightning piercing, and as quickly paſt.

Thus does fond Nature with her Children play;
Juſt ſhews us Joys, then ſnatches it away.
'Tis not th' Exceſs of Pleaſure makes it ſhort,
The Pain of Love's as raging as the Sport;
And yet, alas! that laſts: We fight all Night
With Grief; but ſcarce one Moment with Delight.
Some little Pain may check her kind Deſire,
But not enough to make her once Retire.
Maids Wounds for Pleaſure bear, as Men for Praiſe;
Here Honour heals, there Love the Smart allays.
The World, if juſt, would harmful Courage blame,
And this more innocent reward with Fame.

Now

Nor she her well-contented Thoughts employs,
On her past Fears, and on her future Joys:
Whose Harbinger did roughly all remove,
To make fit Room for great, luxurious Love.
Fond of her welcome Guest, her Arms embrace
My Body, and her Hands another Place; [grow,
Which with one Touch so pleas'd and proud doth
It swells beyond the Grasp that made it so;
Confinement scorns, in any straiter Walls
Than those of Love, where it contented falls.
Tho' 'twice o'erthrown, he more enflam'd does
And will, to the last Drop, fight out the Prize. [rise,
She like some *Amazon* in Story proves,
That overcomes the *Hero* whom she loves.
In the close Strife she takes so much Delight,
She then can think of nothing but the Fight:
With Joys she lays him panting at her Feet,
But with more Joy does his Recov'ry meet.
Her trembling Hands first gently raise his Head,
She almost dies for fear that he is dead;
Then binds his Wounds up with a busy Hand,
And with that Balm enables him to stand,
'Till by her Eyes she conquers him once more,
And wounds him deeper than she did before.
Tho' fallen from the Top of Pleasure's Hill,
With longing Eyes we look up thither still;
Still thither our unweary'd Wishes tend,
'Till we that Height of Happiness ascend.

By gentle Steps; th' Ascent itself exceeds
All Joys, but that alone to which it leads:
First then, so long and lovingly we kiss,
As if, like Doves, we know no dearer Bliss.
Still in one Mouth our Tongues together play,
While groping Hands are pleas'd no less than they.
Thus cling'd together, now a-while we rest,
Breathing our Souls into each other's Breast;
Then give a gen'ral Kiss to all our Parts,
While this best Way we make Exchange of Hearts.
Here would my Praise, as well as Pleasure, dwell;
Enjoyment's self I scarcely like so well:
The little this comes short of Rage and Strength,
Is largely recompenc'd with endless Length.
This is a Joy would last, if we could stay;
But Love's too eager to admit Delay,
And hurries us along so smooth a Way.
Now, wanton with Delight, we nimbly move
Our pliant Limbs, in all the Shapes of Love;
Our Motions not like those of gamesome Fools,
Whose active Bodies shew their heavy Souls:
But Sports of Love, in which a willing Mind
Makes us as able, as our Hearts are kind:
At length, all languishing, and out of Breath,
Panting, as in the Agonies of Death,
We lie entranc'd, 'till one provoking Kiss
Transports our ravish'd Souls to Paradise.

O Heav'n of Love! thou Moment of Delight!
Wrong'd by my Words, my Fancy does thee Right.
Methinks I lie all melting in her Charms,
And fast lock'd up within her Legs and Arms;
Bent on our Minds, and all our Thoughts on Fire,
Just lab'ring in the Pangs of fierce Desire.
At once, like Misers, wallowing in their Store,
In full Possession; yet desiring more.
Thus with repeated Pleasures, while we waste
Our happy Hours that like short Minutes past,
To such a Sum of Bliss our Joys amount;
The Numbers now becomes too great to count.
Silent, as Night, are all sincerest Joys,
Like deepest Waters running with least Noise.
But now at last, for Want of farther Force,
From Deeds, alas! we fall into Discourse;
A Fall, which each of us in vain bemoans;
A greater Fall than that of Kings from Thrones.
The Tide of Pleasure flowing now no more,
We lie like Fish left gasping on the Shore;
And now, as after fighting, Wounds appear,
Which we in Heat did neither feel, nor fear:
She, for her sake, intreats me to give o'er,
And yet, for mine, would gladly suffer more.
Her Words are coy, while all her Motions woo,
And, when she asks me, if it please me too,
I rage to shew how well, but 'twill not do.

Thus would hot Love run itself out of Breath,
And wanting Rest, find it too soon in Death;
Did not wise Nature with a gentle Force,
Restrain its Rage, and stop its headlong Course.
Indulgently severe, she well does spare
This Child of hers, that most deserves her Care.

TALE XXXVI.

The GAME *of* PUT.

DICK serv'd a Widow of no mean Esteem:
He lik'd his Mistress, and his Mistress him.
By Day, in Trade, they always join their Heads;
At Night, a Wainscot parted their two Beds.
Few Cares disturb'd the Current of their Life;
Nor liv'd they less in Love than Man and Wife.
Oft' in the Ev'ning, when their Shop was shut,
With joint Consent they sat them down to *Put*.
Eager the Youth, experienc'd well the Dame,
They sometimes play'd a Rubbers and a Game.
Ev'n in the Night, when Madam could not sleep,
She rapp'd the Wainscot. Out would *Richard* creep.
Madam, d'ye *put*?—Ay, *Richard*, she'd reply.—
I'll see't, quoth *Dick*: And *Dick* would seldom lye.
Thus ev'ry Night the wak'd him twice or more:
And, when at in, she cur'd not to give o'er.
Dick found at last, that in long-run, the Dame
Would get by much th' Advantage of the Game:

Th

The Night's Expence was always at his Cost;
He never went one Deal—but what he loſt.
The Play well pleas'd him: but would that ſuffice?
A loſing Gameſter ſhould retire, if wiſe:
This made him coy and careful of his Stock:
He ſlept ſo ſound, Madam might knock, and knock.
'Twas with Reluctance when he once appear'd;
But if ſhe knock'd again—he never heard.
Thus went ſome Weeks at barely once a-Night:
At laſt, ev'n that exceeded *Richard*'s Might.
Not that his Duty knew the leaſt Decay;
But the Truth was, he had no more to play:
The Wainſcot rang: No Anſwer was receiv'd.
Much Madam wonder'd, and as much was griev'd.
Afraid, poor Soul! that *Richard* had been dead,
And, in great Anguiſh, ſtarting from her Bed,
She ſtrikes a Light; which in her Hand ſhe brings,
And views him cloſely, and pulls off the Things:
Then feels his Pulſe, and liſtens to his Breath:
Both weak indeed;—yet without Sign of Death.
But, ah! from theſe what Symptoms could ſhe know?
For Death had meanly fix'd himſelf below!
Exploring by Degrees, ſhe finds the Place
Where the fell Shade triumph'd in *Dick*'s Diſgrace.
There lay the goodly Ruins of his Strength,
A Lump of Languor, and a lifeleſs Length.
Her mighty Grief what Prudence could controul?
Flow'd her full Eyes, and heav'd her inmoſt Soul!

With

With friendly Care she warm'd the morbid Part:
But Nature seem'd repugnant to her Art.
Without succeeding, she put on the Clothes,
And stole, in Silence to her No-Repose.

Dick did not sleep so soundly all this while,
But much he labour'd to keep in the Smile.
Had he giv'n way—to *Satan*, or to Grace,
He must have seen the Game, or left the Place.
Neither could well be done: So Craft prevail'd;
He snor'd the more, the more his Dame assail'd.

Long Madam lay not silent in her Bed;
Us'd to the Game that still was in her Head.
Time, she conceiv'd, and Nature, would restore
Dick's dire Decay, that mock'd her Art before.
Right was her Reasoning, had the Test been such:
But Time she built on little; Nature, much.
'Twas always said, in Story and in Song,
Women think right, but Passion leads them wrong.

Tir'd with expecting, and resolv'd to storm,
She gives the Signal in the usual Form.
Snug lies the Youth, as yet in Sleep profound,
Thrice rings the Wainscot with a louder Sound.
At length, as just now waken'd by the Shock,
Dick utters faintly, Madam, did you knock?—
Knock, did'st thou ask? why here's a Game to see:
But one may see, and not again for Thee.—
(Ah Madam! I know better Things, quoth *Dick*:
You've seen my Cards; and that's an unfair Trick.

FINIS.

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